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Ismal Babcock
Room 31

CHAUCER'S

PROLOGUE, KNIGHT'S TALE, AND NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE

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GEOFFREY CHAUCER

GEOFFREY CHAUCER'S

THE PROLOGUE TO THE BOOK OF THE TALES OF CANTERBURY

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

THE NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE

EDITED, WITH NOTES AND GLOSSARY,

BY

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Whan that aprille with his shoures soote
The droughte of marche hath perced to the roote
And bathud every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertue engendred is the flour
Whan zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Enspirud hath in every holte and heeth
The tendre croppes and the yonge sonne
Hath in the ram his halfe cours ironne
And smale foweles maken melodie
That slepen al the nyght with open yhe
So pricketh hem nature in hir corages
Thanne longen folk to gon on pilgrimages

THE PROLOGUE

Whan that° Aprille with his shoures sote
The droughte of March hath perced to the rote,
And bathed every veyne in swich° licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram° his halfe cours y-ronne,
And smale fowles maken melodye,
That slepen al the night with open ye,
So priketh hem nature in hir corages:
Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes.
To ferne halwes couthe in sondry londes,°
And specially from every shires ende
Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende,
The holy blisful martir° for to seke,
That hem hath holpen whan that they were seke.
Bifel° that in that sesoun on a day
In Southwerk at the Tabard° as I lay

Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,°
At night was come into that hostelrye
Wel nine and twenty° in a compaignye
Of sondry folk by aventure y-falle
In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle,
That toward Caunterbury wolden ride.
The chambres and the stables weren wide,
And wel we weren esed atte beste.
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
So hadde I° spoken with hem everichon,
That I was of hir felaweshipe anon;
And made forward erly for to rise,
To take our wey, ther as I yow devise.
But natheles, whyl I have time and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thinketh° it acordaunt to resoun
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren and of what degree,
And eek in what array that they were inne°;
And at° a knight than wol I first biginne.
A KNIGHT ther was and that a worthy° man,
That, fro the time that he first bigan
To riden° out, he loved chivalrye,

Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisye.
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,
As wel in cristendom as in hethenesse,
And evere honoured for his worthinesse.
At Alisaundre° he was whan it was wonne;
Ful ofte time he hadde the bord bigonne
Aboven alle naciouns in Pruce.
In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,
No Cristen man so ofte of his degree.
In Gernade at the sege eek hadde he be
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.
At Lyeys was he, and at Satalye,
Whan they were wonne; and in the Grete See
At many a noble armee hadde he be.
At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,
And foughten for our feith at Tramissene
In listes thryes, and ay slayn his foo.
This ilke worthy knight hadde been also
Somtime with the lord of Palatye,
Agayn another° hethen in Turkye:
And everemore he hadde a sovereyn prys.
And though that° he were° worthy, he was wys,
And of his port as meke as is a mayde.
He nevere yet no vileinye ne sayde

In al his lyf, unto no maner wight.
He was a verray parfit, gentil knight.
But for to tellen yow of his array,
His hors° were gode, but he ne was nat gay;
Of fustian he wered a gipoun
Al bismotered with his habergeoun;
For he was late y-come from his viage,
And wente for to doon his pilgrimage.
With him ther was his sone, a yong SQUYER,
A lovyere,° and a lusty bacheler,°
With lokkes crulle as they were leyd in presse.
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
And wonderly delivere and of greet strengthe.
And he hadde been somtime in chivachye
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Picardye,
And born him wel, as of so litel space,°
In hope to stonden in his lady° grace.
Embrouded was he, as it were a mede
Al ful of freshe floures white and rede.
Singinge he was, or floytinge,° al the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his goune, with sleves longe and wide;
Wel coude he sitte on hors and faire ride.
He coude songes make and wel endite,

Juste and eek daunce, and wel purtreye and write.
So hote he lovede that by nightertale
He sleep namore than doth a nightingale.
Curteys he was, lowly and servisable,
And carf biforn his fader at the table.
A YEMAN hadde he, and servaunts namo
At that time, for him liste ride so°;
And he was clad in cote and hood of grene,
A sheef of pecok arwes brighte and kene
Under his belt he bar ful thriftily
(Wel coude he dresse his takel yemanly,
His arwes drouped nought with fetheres lowe),
And in his hand he bar a mighty bowe.
A not-heed hadde he, with a broun visage.
Of wode-craft wel coude he al the usage.
Upon his arm he bar a gay bracer,
And by his side a swerd and a bokeler,
And on that other side a gay daggere,
Harneised wel, and sharp as poynt of spere;
A Cristofre on his brest of silver shene.
An horn he bar, the bawdrik was of grene;
A forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.
Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,
That of hir smiling was ful simple and coy;
Hir gretteste ooth was but 'By Seynte Loy°':

And she was cleped Madame Eglentine.°
Ful wel she song the service divine,
Entuned° in hir nose ful semely;
And Frensh she spak ful faire and fetisly,
After the scole of Stratford-atte-Bowe,°
For Frensh of Paris was to hir unknowe.
At mete wel y-taught° was she withalle;
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
Ne wette hir fingres in hir sauce depe;
Wel coude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe
That no drope ne fille° upon hir brest;
In curteisye was set ful moche hir lest.
Hir over lippe wiped she so clene,
That in hir coppe ther was no ferthing sene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte
Ful semely after hir mete she raughte.
And sikerly she was of greet disport,
And ful plesaunt, and amiable of port,
And peyned hir to countrefete chere
Of Court, and to been estatlich of manere,
And to ben holden digne of reverence.
But, for to speken of hir conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous,
She wolde wepe, if that she sawe° a mous
Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde

Of smale houndes hadde she, that she fedde
With rosted flesh, or milk and wastel breed.
But sore wepte she if oon of hem were deed,
Or if men° smoot it with a yerde smerte;
And al was conscience and tendre herte.
Ful semely hir wimpel pinched was;
Hir nose tretis; hir eyen greye as glas;
Hir mouth ful smal, and thereto softe and reed;
But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed,
It was almost a spanne brood, I trowe;
For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.
Ful fetis was hir cloke, as I was war.
Of smal coral aboute hir arm she bar
A peire° of bedes, gauded al with grene;
And theron heng a broche of gold ful shene,
On which ther was first write a crowned A,
And after *Amor vincit omnia.*
Another NONNE with hir hadde she.
That was hir chapeleyne, and PREESTES thre.
A MONK ther was, a fair for the maistrye,
An outridere, that lovede venerye;
A manly man, to been an abbot able.
Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable;
And whan he rood men mighte his bridel here
Ginglen in a whistling wind as clere

And eek as loude as doth the chapel belle,
Ther as this lord was keper of the celle.
The reule° of seynt Maure or of seynt Beneit°
By cause that it was old and som-del streit,
This ilke monk leet olde thinges pace,
And held after the newe world the space.
He yaf nat of that text a pulled° hen
That seith that hunters been nat holy men;
Ne that a monk whan he is rechelees
Is likned til a fish that is waterlees;
This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloistre.
But thilke text held he nat worth an oistre.
And I seyde his opinioun was good.°
What sholde he studie, and make himselven wood,
Upon a book in cloistre alwey to poure,
Or swinken with his handes and laboure,
As Austin bit°? How shal the world be served?
Lat Austin have his swink to him reserved.
Therfor he was a pricasour aright;
Grehoundes he hadde, as swifte as foul in flight;
Of priking and of hunting for the hare
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.°
I seigh his sleves purfiled at the hond
With grys, and that the fineste of a lond°;
And, for to festne his hood under his chin,

He hadde of gold ywrought a ful curious pin;
A love-knot in the gretter ende ther was.
His heed was balled, that shoon as any glas,
And eek his face as he hadde been enoynt.
He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt;
His eyen stepe and rollinge in his heed,
That stemed as a forneys of a leed;
His botes souple, his hors in greet estat.
Now certeynly he was a fair prelat;
He was nat pale as a for-pined goost.
A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
His palfrey was as broun as is a berie.

A FREERE ther was, a wantoun and a merie,
A limitour, a ful solempne man.
In alle the ordres foure° is noon that can
So moche of daliaunce and fair langage.
He hadde maad ful many a mariage°
Of yonge wommen at his owene cost.
Unto his ordre he was a noble post.
Ful wel biloved and famulier was he
With frankeleyns overal in his contree,
And with worthy wommen of the toun:
For he hadde power of confessioun,
As seyde himself, more than a curat,
For of his ordre he was licentiat.

Ful swetely herde he confessioun,
And plesaunt was his absolucioun;
He was an esy man to yeve penaunce
Ther as he wiste to have a good pitaunce;
For unto a povre ordre for to yivé
Is signe that a man is wel y-shrive;
For if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,
He wiste that a man was repentaunt:
For many a man so hard is of his herte,
He may nat wepe although him sore smerte;
Therfore in stede of weping and preyeres
Men° moote yeve silver to the povre freres.
His tipet was ay farsed ful of knives°
And pinnes, for to yeven faire wives.
And certeinly he hadde a mery note;
Wel coude he singe and pleyen on a rote.
Of yeddinges he bar outrely the prys.
His nekke whyt was as the flour-de-lys.
Therto he strong was as a champioun.
He knew the tavernes wel in every toun,
And everich hostiler and tappestere
Bet than a lazar or a beggestere°;
For unto swich a worthy man as he
Acorded nat, as by his facultee,°
To have with seke lazars aqueyntaunce.

It is nat honeste, it may nat avaunce°
For to delen° with no swich poraille,
But al with riche and selleres of vitaille.
And overal ther as° profit sholde arise,
Curteys he was, and lowely of servise.
Ther nas no man nowher so vertuous;
He was the beste beggere in his hous,
For though a widwe hadde nought a sho,
So plesaunt was his *'In principio,°'*
Yet wolde he have a ferthing° er he wente.
His purchas was wel bettre than his rente.
And rage he coude as it were right a whelpe.
In love-dayes ther coude he mochel helpe.
For ther he was nat lyk a cloisterer,
With a thredbare cope, as is a povre scoler,
But he was lyk a maister or a pope.
Of double worstede was his semi-cope,
That rounded as a belle out of the presse.
Somwhat he lipsed for his wantounesse,
To make his English swete upon his tonge;
And in his harping,° whan that he hadde songe,
His eyen twinkled in his heed aright,
As doon the sterres in the frosty night.
This worthy limitour was cleped Huberd.

A MARCHANT was ther with a forked berd,

In mottelee, and hye on horse he sat;
Upon his heed a Flaundrish bevere hat,
His botes clasped faire and fetisly.
His resouns he spak ful solempnely,
Souninge alway thencrees of his winninge.
He wolde the see were kept for any thinge°
Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle.
Wel coude he in eschaunge° sheeldes selle.
This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette;
Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette,
So estatly was he of his governaunce
With his bargaynes and with his chevisaunce.
For sothe he was a worthy man withalle,
But, sooth to seyn, I noot how men him calle.
A CLERK ther was of Oxenford also,
That unto logik hadde long y-go.
As lene was his hors as is a rake,
And he nas nat right fat, I undertake,
But loked holwe, and therto soberly.
Ful thredbare was his overeste courtepy;
For he hadde geten him yet no benefice,
Ne was so worldly for to have office.
For him was° levere have at his beddes heed
Twenty bokes clad in blak or reed
Of Aristotle and his philosophye,

Than robes riche or fithele or gay sautrye.
But al be that he was a philosophre,°
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;
But al that he mighte of his freendes hente,
On bokes and on lerninge he it spente,
And bisily gan for the soules preye
Of hem that yaf him wherwith to scoleye.
Of studie took he most cure and most hede.
Nought o word spak he more than was nede,
And that was seyd in forme and reverence,
And short and quik and ful of hy sentence;
Sowninge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.

A SERGEANT OF THE LAWE, war and wys,
That often hadde been at the parvys,
Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.
Discreet he was and of greet reverence —
He semed swich, his wordes weren so wise.
Justice he was ful often in assise,
By patente and by pleyn commissioun;
For his science and for his heigh renoun
Of fees and robes hadde he many oon.
So greet a purchasour° was nowher noon.
Al was fee simple to him in effect,
His purchasing mighte nat been infect.

Nowher so bisy a man as he ther nas,
And yet he semed bisier than he was.
In termes hadde he cas° and domes alle,
That from the time of king William were falle.
Therto he coude endite and make a thing,
Ther coude no wight pinche at his writing;
And every statut coude he pleyn by rote.
He rood but hoomly in a medlee cote,
Girt with a ceynt of silk with barres smale;
Of his array telle I no lenger tale.
A Frankeleyn was in his compaignye;
Whyt was his berd as is the dayesye.
Of his complexioun° he was sangwyn.
Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in wyn.
To liven in delyt was ever his wone,
For he was Epicurus owene sone,
That heeld opinioun that pleyn delyt°
Was verraily felicitee parfyt.
An housholdere, and that a greet, was he;
Seynt Julian° he was in his contree.
His breed, his ale, was alweys after oon;
A bettre envined man was nowher noon.
Withouten bake-mete was nevere his hous
Of fish and flesh, and that so plentevous,
It snewed in his hous of mete and drinke.

Of alle deyntees that men coude thinke,
After the sondry sesouns of the yeer,
So chaunged he his mete and his soper.
Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in mewe,
And many a breem and many a luce in stewe.
Wo was his cook but if his sauce were
Poynaunt and sharp, and redy al his gere.
His table dormant° in his halle alway
Stood redy covered al the longe day.
At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire°;
Ful ofte time he was knight of the shire.°
An anlas and a gipser al of silk
Heng at his girdel, whyt as morne milk.
A shirreve hadde he been and a countour;
Was nowher such a worthy vavasour.

An Haberdasher and a Carpenter,
A Webbe, a Dyere, and a Tapicer,—
And they were clothed alle in o liveree,°
Of a solempne and a greet fraternitee.
Ful fresh and newe hir gere apiked was;
Hir knives were chaped nought with bras,
But al with silver wrought ful clene and weel,
Hir girdles and hir pouches everydeel.
Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys
To sitten in a yeldehalle on a deys.

Everich for the wisdom that he can°
Was shaply for to been an alderman;
For catel hadde they ynough and rente,
And eek hir wives wolde it wel assente,
And elles certeyn were they to blame;
It is ful fair to been y-clept 'Madame,'
And goon to vigilyes al bifore,°
And have a mantel royalliche y-bore.

A Cook they hadde with hem for the nones,
To boille the chiknes with the mary-bones,
And poudre-marchant tart and galingale.
Wel coude he knowe a draughte of London ale.
He coude roste and sethe and broille and frye,
Maken mortreux and wel bake a pye.
But greet harm° was it, as it thoughte me,
That on his shine a mormal hadde he;
For blankmanger, that made he with the beste.

A Shipman was ther, woning fer by weste,
For aught I woot he was of Dertemouthe.
He rood upon a rouncy as he couthe,°
In a gowne of falding to the knee.
A daggere hanging on a laas hadde he
Aboute his nekke under his arm adoun.
The hote somer hadde maad his hewe al broun;
And certeynly he was a good felawe.°

Ful many a draughte of wyn had he y-drawe
From Burdeux-ward,° whyl that the chapman sleep.
Of nice conscience took he no keep.
If that he faught and hadde the hyer hond,
By water he sente hem hoom° to every lond.
But of his craft to rekene wel his tides,
His stremes and his daungers him besides,
His herberwe and his mone, his lodemenage,
Ther nas noon swich from Hulle to Cartage.°
Hardy he was, and wys to undertake;
With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake.
He knew alle the havenes, as they were,
From Gootlond to the cape of Finistere,
And every crike in Britayne and in Spayne;
His barge y-cleped was the Maudelayne.°
With us ther was a Doctour of Phisyk,
In al this world ne was ther noon him lyk,
To speke of° phisik and of surgerye;
For he was grounded in astronomye.°
He kepte his pacient a ful greet del
In houres by his magik naturel.
Wel coude he fortunen the ascendent
Of his images for his pacient.
He knew the cause of everich maladye,
Were it of hoot or cold, or moiste or drye,°

And where engendred and of what humour.
He was a verray parfit practisour;
The cause y-knowe and of his harm the rote,
Anon he yaf the seke man his bote.
Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries,
To sende him drogges and his letuaries,
For ech of hem made other for to winne;
Hir frendshipe nas nat newe to biginne.
Wel knew he the olde Esculapius,°
And Deïscorides, and eek Rufus,
Old Ypocras, Haly and Galien,
Serapion, Razis and Avicen,
Averrois, Damascien and Constantyn,
Bernard and Gatesden and Gilbertyn.
Of his diete mesurable was he,
For it was of no superfluitee,
But of greet norissing and digestible.
His studie was but litel on the Bible.
In sangwin and in pers he clad was al,
Lined with taffata and with sendal;
And yet he was but esy of dispence.°
He kepte that he wan in pestilence°;
For gold in phisik is a cordial,°
Therfor he lovede gold in special.

A good Wyf was ther of biside Bathe,

But she was somdel deef, and that was scathe.
Of cloth-making she hadde swiche an haunt°
She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.
In al the parishe wyf ne was ther noon°
That to the offring bifore hir sholde goon;
And if ther dide, certeyn so wrooth was she,
That she was out of alle charitee.
Hir coverchiefs ful fine were of ground,
I dorste swere they weyeden ten° pound,
That on a Sonday weren upon hir heed.
Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,
Ful streite y-teyd, and shoes ful moiste and newe;
Bold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.
She was a worthy womman al hir live,
Housbondes at chirche-dore° she hadde five,
Withouten other compaignye in youthe°
(But therof nedeth nat to speke as nouthe).
And thryes hadde she been at Jerusalem;
She hadde passed many a straunge streem;
At Rome she hadde been and at Boloigne,°
In Galice° at Seynt Jame and at Coloigne.°
She coude moche of wandring by the weye.
Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.
Upon an amblere esily she sat,
Y-wimpled wel, and on hir heed an hat

As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;
A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,
And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.
In felaweship wel coude she laughe and carpe
Of remedies of love she knew perchaunce,°
For she coude of that art the olde daunce.
A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a povre PERSOUN of a toun,
But riche he was of holy thought and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche;
His parishens devoutly wolde he teche.
Benigne he was and wonder diligent
And in adversitee ful pacient;
And swich he was y-preved ofte sithes.
Ful looth were him to cursen for his tithes,°
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
Unto his povre parishens aboute
Of his offring, and eek of his substaunce.°
He coude in litel thing han suffisaunce.
Wyd was his parishe, and houses fer asonder,
But he ne lafte nat for reyn ne thonder,
In siknes nor in meschief to visite
The ferreste in his parishe, moche and lite,
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf.°

This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf,
That first he wroughte and afterward he taughte;
Out of the gospel° he tho wordes caughte,
And this figure he added eek therto
That "If gold ruste, what shal iren do?"
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
No wonder is a lewed man to ruste;
And shame it is, if a preest take keep,
A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep.
Wel oughte a preest ensample for to yive
By his clennesse how that his sheep shold live.
He sette nat his benefice to hire,
And leet his sheep encombred in the mire,
And ran to London, unto Seynt Poules,
To seken him a chaunterye° for soules,
Or with a bretherhed to been withholde°;
But dwelte at hoom and kepte wel his folde
So that the wolf ne made it nat miscarie;
He was a shepherde and no mercenarie.
And though he holy were and vertuous,
He was to sinful man nat despitous,°
Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,
But in his teching discreet and benigne.
To drawen folk to hevene by fairnesse,
By good ensample, this was his bisinesse;

But it were any persone obstinat,
What so he were, of heigh or lowe estat,
Him wolde he snibben sharply for the nonis.
A bettre preest, I trowe that nowher noon is.
He wayted after no pompe and reverence,
Ne maked him a spiced° conscience,
But Cristes lore, and his Apostles twelve,
He taughte; but first he folwed it himselve.
With him ther was a PLOWMAN, was his brother,°
That hadde y-lad of dong ful many a fother.
A trewe swinkere and a good was he,
Livinge in pees and parfit charitee.
God loved he best with al his hole herte
At alle times, though him gained or smerte,°
And thanne his neighebour right as himselve.
He wolde threshe, and therto dike and delve,
For Cristes sake, for every povre wight,
Withouten hire, if it lay in his might.
His tithes payed he ful faire and wel,
Bothe of his propre swink and his catel.°
In a tabard he rood upon a mere.°
Ther was also a Reve and a Millere,
A Somnour and a Pardoner also,
A Maunciple and myself; ther were namo.
The MILLERE was a stout carl for the nones

Ful big he was of braun and eek of bones;
That proved wel, for overal ther he cam,
At wrastling he wolde have alwey the ram.
He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre,
Ther nas no dore that he nolde heve of harre,
Or breke it, at a renning, with his heed.
His berd as any sowe or fox was reed
And therto brood, as though it were a spade.
Upon the cop right of his nose he hade
A werte, and theron stood a tuft of heres,
Reed as the bristles of a sowes eres;
His nose-thirles blake were and wide°;
A swerd and a bokeler bar he by his side;
His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys;
He was a janglere and a goliardeys,
And that° was most of sinne and harlotryes.
Wel coude he stelen corn° and tollen thryes;
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold,° pardee!
A whyt cote and a blew hood wered he.
A baggepipe wel coude he blowe and sowne,
And therwithal he broughte us out of towne.

A gentil MAUNCIPLE was ther of a temple,
Of which achatours mighte take exemple
For to be wise in bying of vitaille.
For whether that he payde or took by taille,°

Algate he wayted so in his achat,
That he was ay biforn and in good stat.
Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace,
That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
The wisdom of an heep of lerned men!
Of maistres hadde he mo than thryes ten,
That were of lawe expert and curious;
Of whiche ther were a doseyn in that hous
Worthy to been stiwardes of rente and lond
Of any lord that is in Engeloud,
To make him live by his propre good°
In honour dettelees, but he were wood,
Or live as scarsly as him list desire;
And able for to helpen al a shire
In any cas that mighte falle or happe;
And yit this maunciple sette hir aller° cappe.
The Reve was a sclendre colerik man.
His berd was shave as ny as ever he can;
His heer was by his eres round y-shorn,
His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn;
Ful longe were his legges and ful lene
Y-lyk a staf, ther was no calf y-sene.
Wel coude he kepe a gerner and a binne;
Ther was noon auditour coude on him winne.°
Wel wiste he by the droughte and by the reyn

The yelding of his seed and of his greyn.
His lordes sheep, his neet, his dayerye,
His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his pultrye,
Was hoolly in this reves governing,
And by his covenaunt yaf the rekening
Sin that his lord was twenty yeer of age;
Ther coude no man bringe him in arrerage.
Ther nas baillif, ne herde, ne other hine,
That he ne knew his sleighte° and his covine;
They were adrad of him, as of the deeth.
His woning was ful fair upon an heeth,
With grene trees shadwed was his place.
He coude bettre than his lord purchace.
Ful riche he was astored prively;
His lord wel coude he plesen subtilly
To yeve and lene him of his owene good,°
And have a thank and yet a cote and hood.
In youthe he lerned hadde a good mister;
He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.
This reve sat upon a ful good stot,
That was al pomely grey and highte Scot.
A long surcote of pers upon he hade,
And by his side he bar a rusty blade.
Of Northfolk was this reve of which I telle,
Biside a toun men clepen Baldeswelle.

Tukked he was as is a frere aboute,°
And evere he rood the hindreste of our route.
A Somnour was ther with us in that place,
That hadde a fyr-reed cherubinnes° face,
For sawcefleem he was, with eyen narwe;
As hot he was and lecherous as a sparwe,
With scalled browes blake and piled berd;
Of his visage children were aferd.
Ther nas quik-silver, litarge, ne brimstoon,
Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre noon,
Ne oynement that wolde clense and bite,
That him mighte helpen of his whelkes white,
Ne of the knobbes sittinge on his chekes.
Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes,
And for to drinken strong wyn reed as blood.
Thanne wolde he speke and crye as he were wood.
And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn,
Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.
A fewe termes hadde he, two or thre,
That he had lerned out of som decree;
No wonder is, he herde it al the day;
And eek ye knowen wel, how that a jay
Can clepen 'Watte' as well as can the pope.
But whoso coude in other thing him grope,°
Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophye;

Ay '*Questio quid iuris*°' wolde he crye.
He was a gentil harlot and a kinde;
A bettre felawe sholde men nought finde.
He wolde suffre for a quart of wyn
A good felawe to have his concubyn
A twelf-month, an excuse him atte fulle.
And prively a finch° eek coude he pulle.
And if he fond owher a good felawe,
He wolde techen him to have non awe,
In swich cas, of the Erchedeknes° curs,
But if a mannes soule were in his purs;
For in his purs he sholde y-punished be.
'Purs is the Erchedeknes helle,' seyde he.
But wel I woot he lyed right in dede;
Of cursing oughte ech gilty man him drede
(For curs wol slee right as assoilling savith)
And also war him of a *Significavit*.
In daunger° hadde he at his owene gise
The yonge girles° of the diocise,
And knew hir counseil, and was al hir reed.
A gerland hadde he set upon his heed
As greet as it were for an ale-stake;
A bokeler hadde he maad him of a cake.
With him ther rood a gentil PARDONER°
Of Rouncivale, his frend and his compeer,

That streight was comen fro the court of Rome.
Ful loude he song, 'Com hider, love, to me!'
This somnour bar to him a stif burdoun,
Was nevere trompe of half so greet a soun.
This pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex,
But smothe it heng, as doth a strike of flex;
By ounces henge his lokkes that he hadde,
And therwith he his shuldres overspradde;
But thinne it lay by colpons oon and oon;
But hood for jolitee wered he noon,
For it was trussed up in his walet.
Him thoughte he rood al of the newe jet;
Dishevele, save his cappe, he rood al bare.
Swiche glaringe eyen hadde he as an hare.
A vernicle°, hadde he sowed upon his cappe.
His walet lay biforn him in his lappe
Bret-ful of pardoun come from Rome al hoot.
A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot.
No berd hadde he, ne nevere sholde have,
As smothe it was as it were late yshave;

* * * * * * *

But of his craft, fro Berwik into Ware,
Ne was ther swich another pardoner.
For in his male he hadde a pilwe-beer,
Which that, he seyde, was our lady° veyl;

He seyde, he hadde a gobet of the seyl
That Seynt Peter hadde whan that he wente
Upon the see til Jhesu Crist him hente.
He hadde a croys of latoun ful of stones
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones.
But with thise relikes, whan that he fond
A povre person dwelling upon lond,°
Upon a day° he gat him more moneye
Than that the person gat in monthes tweye.
And thus with feyned flaterye and japes,
He made the person and the peple his apes.°
But trewely to tellen atte laste,
He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste;
Wel coude he rede a lessoun or a storie,
But alderbest° he song an offertorie;
For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe,
He moste preche and wel affile his tonge
To winne silver, as he ful wel coude;
Therefore he song so meriely and loude.
Now have I told you shortly in a clause°
Thestat,° tharray, the nombre, and eek the cause
Why that assembled was this compaignye
In Southwerk at this gentil hostelrye
That highte the Tabard, faste by the Belle.
But now is time to yow for to telle°

How that we baren us that ilke night,
Whan we were in that hostelrye alight.
And after wol I telle of our viage
And al the remenaunt of our pilgrimage,
But first I pray yow of your curteisye,
That ye narette it nat my vileinye,
Though that I pleynly speke in this matere,
To telle yow hir wordes and hir chere,
Ne though I speke hir wordes proprely;
For this ye knowen al so wel as I,
Who-so shal telle a tale after a man,
He moot reherce as ny as ever he can
Everich a° word, if it be in his charge,°
Al speke he never so rudeliche and large;
Or elles he moot telle his tale untrewe,
Or feyne thing,° or finde wordes newe.
He may nat spare, although he were his brother;
He moot as wel seye o word as another.°
Crist spak himself ful brode in holy writ,
And wel ye woot no vileinye is it.
Eek Plato° seith, whoso can him rede,
'The wordes mote be cosin to the dede.'
Also I prey yow to foryeve it me
Al have I nat° set folk in hir degree
Here in this tale as that they sholde stonde;

My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.
Greet chere made our host us everichon,
And to the soper sette he us anon;
And served us with vitaille at the beste.
Strong was the wyn and wel to drinke us leste.
A semely man our hoste° was withalle
For to been a marshal in an halle;
A large man he was with eyen stepe,
A fairer burgeys was ther noon in Chepe;
Bold of his speche and wys and wel y-taught,
And of manhod him lakkede right naught.
Eek therto he was right a mery man,
And after soper pleyen he bigan,
And spak of mirthe amonges othere thinges,
Whan that we hadde maad our rekeninges°;
And seyde thus, 'Now, lordinges, trewely
Ye been to me right welcome hertely;
For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,
I ne saugh this yeer so mery a compaignye
At ones in this herberwe as is now.
Fayn wolde I doon yow mirthe, wiste I how.
And of a mirthe I am right now bithought,
To doon yow ese, and it shal coste nought.
'Ye goon to Caunterbury (God yow spede!°
The blisful martir quite yow your mede!),

And wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,
Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye°;
For trewely confort ne mirthe is noon
To ride by the weye doumb as a stoon;
And therfor wol I maken yow disport,
As I seyde erst, and doon yow som confort.
And if yow liketh° alle by oon assent
For to stonden at my jugement,
And for to werken as I shal yow seye;
Tomorwe whan ye riden by the weye,
Now by my fader° soule, that is deed,
But ye be merye, I wol yeve yow myn heed!
Hold up your hond° withouten more speche.'
Our counseil was nat longe for to seche;
Us thoughte° it was nought worth to make it wys,
And graunted him withouten more avys,
And bad him seye his verdit as him lest.
'Lordinges,' quod he, 'now herkneth for the beste;°
But tak it not, I prey yow, in desdeyn.
This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn,
That ech of yow to shorte with° our weye
In this viage shal telle tales tweye,
To Caunterbury-ward, I mene it so,
And hom-ward he shal tellen othere two,
Of aventures that whilom han bifalle.

And which of yow that bereth him beste of alle,
That is to seyn, that telleth in this cas
Tales of best sentence and most solas,
Shal han a soper at our aller° cost
Here in this place sitting by this post
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.
And for to make yow the more mery
I wol myselven goodly with yow ride
Right at myn owene cost, and be your gide.
And who-so wol my jugement withseye
Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.
And if ye vouchesauf that it be so,
Tel me anon withouten wordes mo,
And I wol erly shape me therfore.'

This thing was graunted, and our othes swore° 810
With ful glad herte, and preyden him also
That he wold vouchesauf for to do so,
And that he wolde been our governour
And of our tales juge and reportour,
And sette a soper at a certeyn prys; 815
And we wol reuled been at his devys,
In heigh and lowe.° And thus by oon assent
We been accorded to his jugement.
And therupon the wyn was fet anoon;
We dronken, and to reste wente echoon, 820

Withouten any lenger taryinge.
A-morwe, whan that day bigan to springe,
Up roos our host and was our aller cok,
And gadrede us togidre alle in a flok,
And forth we riden a litel more than pas,
Unto the Watering° of seynt Thomas.
And there our host bigan his hors areste,
And seyde, 'Lordinges, herkneth if yow leste;
Ye woot° your forward, and I it yow recorde.
If even-song and morwe-song acorde,°
Lat se now who shal telle the firste tale.
As ever mote I drinke wyn or ale,
Who-so be rebel to my jugement°
Shal paye for al that by the weye is spent.
Now draweth cut, er that we ferrer twinne;
He which that hath the shortest shal biginne.
Sir Knight,' quod he, 'my maister and my lord,
Now draweth cut, for that is myn acord.
Cometh° neer,' quod he, 'my lady Prioresse;
And ye, sir Clerk, lat be your shamfastnesse,
Ne studieth nought; ley hond to, every man.'
Anon to drawen every wight bigan,
And shortly for to tellen as it was,
Were it by aventure or sort or cas,
The sothe is this, the cut fil to the knight,

Of which ful blithe and glad was every wight;
And telle he moste his tale as was resoun
By forward and by composicioun,
As ye han herd; what nedeth wordes mo?
And whan this gode man saugh that it was so,
As he that wys was and obedient
To kepe his forward by his free assent,
He seyde, 'Sin I shal biginne the game,
What, welcome be the cut a Goddes name!
Now lat us ride, and herkneth what I seye.'
And with that word we riden forth our weye;
And he bigan with right a mery chere
His tale anon, and seyde in this manere.

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

Whilom, as olde stories tellen us,
Ther was a duk° that highte Theseus ;
Of Atthenes he was lord and governour,
And in his time swich a conquerour
That gretter was ther noon under the sonne.
Ful many a riche contree° hadde he wonne;
What with his wisdom and his chivalrye
He conquered al the regne of Femenye,°
That whilom was y-cleped Scithia;
And weddede the queen Ipolita,
And broughte hir hoom with him in his contree
With muchel glorie and greet solempnitee,
And eek hir yonge suster Emelye.
And thus with victorie and with melodye
Lete I this noble duk to Atthenes ride,
And al his hoost in armes him biside.
And certes, if it nere to long to here,
I wolde han told yow fully the manere,
How wonnen was the regne of Femenye

By Theseus and by his chivalrye;
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Bitwixen Atthenes and Amazones;
And how asseged was Ipolita,
The faire, hardy queen of Scithia;
And of the feste that was at hir weddinge,
And of the tempest at hir hoom-cominge;
But al that thing I moot as now° forbere.
I have, God woot, a large feeld to ere,
And wayke been the oxen in my plough,
The remenant of the tale is long ynough,
I wol nat letten eek noon of this route.
Lat every felawe telle his tale aboute,
And lat see now who shal the soper winne;
And ther I lefte, I wol ageyn biginne.

This duk of whom I make mencioun
When he was come almost unto the toun,
In al his wele and in his moste pride,
He was war, as he caste his eye aside,
Wher that ther kneled in the heighe weye
A compaignye of ladies, tweye and tweye,
Ech after other, clad in clothes blake;
But swich a cry and swich a wo they make
That in this world nis creature livinge
That herde swich another weymentinge;

And of this cry they nolde nevere stenten,
Til they the reynes of his bridel henten.
'What folk been ye, that at myn hoom-cominge
Perturben so my feste with cryinge?'
Quod Theseus, 'have ye so greet envye
Of myn honour that thus compleyne and crye?
Or who hath yow misboden or offended?
And telleth me if it may been amended;
And why that ye been clothed thus in blak.'
The eldeste lady of hem alle spak,
Whan she hadde swowned with a deedly chere,
That it was routhe for to seen and here,
And seyde, 'Lord, to whom Fortune hath yiven
Victorie and as a conquerour to liven,
Nought greveth us your glorie and your honour;
But we biseken mercy and socour.
Have mercy on our wo and our distresse,
Som droppe of pitee thurgh thy gentillesse
Upon us wrecched wommen lat thou falle.
For certes, lord, ther is noon of us alle,
That she ne hath been a duchesse or a quene;
Now be we caitives, as it is wel sene,
Thanked° be Fortune and hir false wheel
That noon estat assureth to be weel.°
And certes, lord, to abiden your presence,

Here in the temple of the goddesse Clemence
We han ben waitinge al this fourtenight;
Now help us, lord, sith it is in thy might.
I wrecche, which that wepe and waille thus,
Was whilom wyf to king Capaneus,
That starf° at Thebes; cursed be that day!
And alle we, that been in this array,
And maken al this lamentacioun,
We losten alle° our housbondes at that toun,
Whyl that the sege theraboute lay.
And yet now the olde Creon, weylaway!
That lord is now of Thebes the citee,
Fulfild of ire and of iniquitee,
He, for despyt and for his tirannye,
To do the dede bodies vileinye,
Of alle our lordes° whiche that ben slawe
Hath alle the bodies on an heep y-drawe,
And wol nat suffren hem, by noon assent,
Neither to been y-buried nor y-brent,
But maketh houndes ete hem in despyt.'
And with that word withouten more respyt
They fillen gruf and criden pitously,
'Have on us wrecched wommen som mercy,
And lat our sorwe sinken in thyn herte.'
This gentil duk doun from his courser sterte

With herte pitous, whan he herde hem speke
Him thoughte that his herte wolde breke,
Whan he saugh hem so pitous and so mat,
That whilom weren of so greet estat;
And in his armes he hem alle up hente,°
And hem conforteth° in ful good entente,
And swoor his ooth, as he was trewe knight,
He wolde doon so ferforthly his might
Upon the tiraunt Creon hem to wreke,
That al the peple of Grece sholde speke
How Creon was of Theseus y-served
As he that hadde his deeth ful wel deserved.
And right anoon withouten more abood
His baner he desplayeth and forth rood
To Thebes-ward, and al his host biside.
No neer Atthenes wolde he go ne ride,
Ne take his ese fully half a day,
But onward on his wey that night he lay;
And sente anoon Ipolita the quene,
And Emelye hir yonge suster shene,
Unto the toun of Atthenes to dwelle,
And forth he rit; ther is namore to telle.
The rede statue of Mars with spere and targe
So shineth in his white baner large,
That alle the feeldes° gliteren up and doun;

And by his baner born is his penoun
Of gold ful riche, in which ther was y-bete
The Minotaur which that he slough in Crete.
Thus rit this duk, thus rit this conquerour,
And in his host of chivalrye the flour,
Til that he cam to Thebes, and alighte
Faire in a feeld, ther as he thoughte fighte.°
But shortly for to speken of this thing,
With Creon, which that was of Thebes king,
He faught, and slough him manly as a knight
In pleyn bataille, and putte the folk to flight;
And by assaut he wan the citee after,
And rente adoun bothe wal and sparre and rafter;
And to the ladies he restored agayn
The bones of hir housbondes that were slayn,
To doon obsequies, as was tho the gise.
But it were al to longe for to devise
The grete clamour and the waymentinge
That the ladies made at the brenninge
Of the bodies, and the grete honour
That Theseus, the noble conquerour,
Doth to the ladies, whan they from him wente;
But shortly for to telle is myn entente.
Whan that this worthy duk, this Theseus,
Hath Creon slayn, and wonne Thebes thus,

Stille in that feeld he took al night his reste,
And dide with al the contree as him leste.
To ransake in the tas of bodies dede,
Hem for to strepe of harneys and of wede,
The pilours diden bisinesse° and cure,
After the bataille and disconfiture.
And so bifel that in the tas they founde,
Thurgh-girt with many a grevous, blody wounde,
Two yonge knightes ligging by and by,
Bothe in oon armes wrought ful richely;
Of whiche two, Arcita highte that oon,
And that other knight highte Palamon.
Nat fully quike ne fully deed they were,
But by hir cote-armures and by hir gere
The heraudes knewe hem best in special°
As they that weren of the blood royal
Of Thebes, and of sustren two y-born.
Out of the tas the pilours han hem torn,
And han hem caried softe unto the tente
Of Theseus; and he ful sone hem sente
To Atthenes, to dwellen in prisoun
Perpetually, he nolde no raunsoun.
And whan this worthy duk hath thus y-don,
He took his host and hoom he rit anon
With laurer crowned as a conquerour;

And there he livith in joye and in honour
Terme of his lyf; what nedeth wordes mo?
And in a tour in angwish and in wo
This Palamon and his felawe Arcite°
For evermore; ther may no gold hem quite.
This passeth yeer by yeer and day by day,
Til it fil ones in a morwe of May
That Emelye, that fairer was to sene
Than is the lilie upon his stalke grene,
And fresher than the May with floures newe
(For with the rose° colour strof hir hewe,
I noot which was the fairer of hem two),
Er it were day, as was hir wone to do,
She was arisen and al redy dight;
For May wol have no slogardye anight.
The sesoun priketh every gentil herte,
And maketh him out of his sleep to sterte,
And seith, 'Arys, and do thyn observaunce.°'
This maketh Emelye have remembraunce
To doon honour to May, and for to rise.°
Y-clothed was she fresh, for to devise°;
Hir yelow heer was broyded in a tresse,
Bihinde hir bak, a yerde long, I gesse.
And in the gardin, at the sonne° upriste,
She walketh up and doun, and as her liste°

She gadereth floures, party white and rede,
To make a subtil gerland for hir hede,
And as an aungel hevenishly she song.
The grete tour, that was so thikke and strong,
Which of the castel was the chief dongeoun,
Ther as the knightes weren in prisoun
(Of which I tolde you and tellen shal°),
Was evene joynant to the gardin-wal,
Ther as this Emelye hadde hir pleyinge.°
Bright was the sonne and cleer in that morninge,
And Palamon, this woful prisoner,
As was his wone, by leve of his gayler,
Was risen, and romed in a chambre on heigh,
In which he al the noble citee seigh,
And eek the gardin, ful of braunches grene,
Ther as this freshe Emelye the shene
Was in hir walk, and romed up and doun.
This sorweful prisoner, this Palamoun,
Goth in the chambre, roming to and fro,
And to himself compleyning of his wo;
That he was born, ful ofte he seyde, alas!
And so bifel, by aventure or cas,
That thurgh a window, thikke of many a barre
Of iren greet, and square as any sparre,
He caste his eye upon Emelya,

And therwithal he bleynte and cride 'A!'
As though he stongen were unto the herte.
And with that cry Arcite anon up-sterte,
And seyde, 'Cosin myn, what eyleth thee,
That art so pale and deedly on to see?
Why cridestow? who hath thee doon offence?
For Goddes love, tak al in pacience
Our prisoun, for it may non other be;
Fortune hath yeven us this adversitee.
Som wikke aspect or disposicioun°
Of Saturne by sum constellacioun,
Hath yeven us this, although we hadde it sworn;
So stood the hevene whan that we were born,
We moste endure it, this is the short and pleyn.'
This Palamon answerde and seyde ageyn,
'Cosin, for sothe, of this opinioun
Thou hast a veyn imaginacioun.°
This prison caused me nat for to crye,
But I was hurt right now thurgh-out myn ye
Into myn herte, that° wol my bane be.
The fairnesse of that lady that I see
Yond in the gardin romen to and fro
Is cause of al my crying and my wo.
I noot wher she be womman or goddesse,
But Venus is it, soothly, as I gesse.'

And therwithal on kneës doun he fil
And seyde, 'Venus, if it be thy wil
Yow° in this gardin thus to transfigure
Bifore me, sorweful, wrecche creature,
Out of this prisoun help that we may scapen.
And if so be my destinee be shapen
By eterne word to dyen in prisoun,
Of our linage have som compassioun
That is so lowe y-brought by tirannye.'
And with that word Arcite gan espye
Wher as this lady romed to and fro,
And with that sighte hir beautee hurte him so,
That, if that Palamon was wounded sore,
Arcite is hurt as moche as he, or more.
And with a sigh he seyde pitously,
'The freshe beautee sleeth me sodeynly
Of hir that rometh in the yonder place;
And but I have hir mercy and hir grace,
That I may seen hir atte leste weye,°
I nam but deed; ther nis no more to seye.'
This Palamon, whan he tho wordes herde,
Dispitously he loked and answerde,
'Whether° seistow this in ernest or in pley?'
'Nay,' quod Arcite, 'in ernest, by my fey!
God help me so, me list ful evele pleye.°'

This Palamon gan knitte his browes tweye:
'It nere,' quod he, 'to thee no greet honour
For to be fals ne for to be traitour
To me, that am thy cosin and thy brother
Y-sworn° ful depe and ech of us til other,
That never, for to dyen in the peyne,°
Til that the deeth departe shal us tweyne,
Neither of us in love to hindren other,
Ne in non other cas, my leve brother;
But that thou sholdest trewely forthren me
In every cas, and I shal forthren thee.
This was thyn ooth and myn also certeyn,
I wot right wel, thou darst it nat withseyn.
Thus artow of my counseil out of doute.
And now thou woldest falsly been aboute°
To love my lady whom I love and serve,
And evere shal til that myn herte sterve.
Now certes, false Arcite, thou shalt nat so;
I loved hir first, and tolde thee my wo
As to my counseil and my brother sworn
To forthre me, as I have told biforn.
For which thou art y-bounden as a knight
To helpen me, if it lay in thy might,
Or elles artow fals, I dar wel seyn.'
This Arcite ful proudly spak ageyn,

'Thou shalt,°' quod he, 'be rather fals than I;
But thou art° fals, I telle thee, utterly;
For par amour° I loved hir first er thow.
What wiltow seyn? thou wistest nat yet now
Whether she be a womman or goddesse!
Thyn is affeccioun of holinesse,
And myn is love as to a creature;
For which I tolde thee myn aventure
As to my cosin and my brother sworn.
I pose that thou lovedest hir biforn,
Wostow nat wel the olde clerkes sawe,
That° "who shal yeve a lover any lawe?"
Love is a gretter lawe, by my pan,
Than may be yeve to any erthely man.
And therfor positif lawe and swich decree°
Is broke alday for love in ech degree.°
A man moot nedes love, maugree his heed;
He may nat fleen it, though he sholde be deed,
Al be she° mayde or widwe or elles wyf.
And eek it is nat lykly, al thy lyf,
To stonden in hir grace, namore shal I;
For wel thou wost thyselven, verraily,
That thou and I be dampned to prisoun
Perpetuelly; us gayneth no raunsoun.
We strive, as dide the houndes for the boon,

They foughte al day, and yet hir part was noon;
Ther cam a kite, whyl that they were so wrothe,
And bar awey the boon bitwixe hem bothe.
And therfore at the kinges court, my brother,
Ech man for himself, ther is non other.
Love if thee list, for I love and ay shal;
And soothly, leve brother, this is al.
Here in this prisoun mote we endure,
And everich of us take his aventure.'
Greet was the stryf and long bitwixe hem tweye,
If that I hadde leyser for to seye;
But to theffect. It happed on a day
(To telle it yow as shortly as I may),
A worthy duk that highte Perotheus,
That felawe was unto duk Theseus
Sin thilke day that they were children lite,
Was come to Atthenes, his felawe to visite,
And for to pleye, as he was wont to do;
For in this world he loved no man so,
And he loved him as tendrely ageyn.
So wel they loved, as olde bokes seyn,°
That whan that oon was deed, soothly to telle,
His felawe wente and soughte him doun in helle —
But of that story list me nat to write.°
Duk Perotheus loved wel Arcite,

And hadde him knowe at Thebes yeer by yere.
And finally, at requeste and preyere
Of Perotheus, withouten any raunsoun,
Duk Theseus him leet out of prisoun
Frely to goon wher that him liste over-al,
In swich a gise as I you tellen shal.
This was the forward, pleynly for tendite,
Bitwixen Theseus and him Arcite:
That if so were, that Arcite were y-founde
Evere in his lyf, by day or night or stounde
In any contree of this Theseus,
And he were caught, it was acorded thus,
That with a swerd he sholde lese his heed.
Ther nas noon other remedye ne reed,
But taketh his leve, and homward he him spedde:
Let him be war, his nekke lith to wedde!
How greet a sorwe suffreth now Arcite!
The deeth he feleth thurgh his herte smite;
He wepeth, weyleth, cryeth pitously;
To sleen himself he wayteth prively.°
He seyde, 'Allas that day that I was born!
Now is my prisoun worse than biforn;
Now is me shape° eternally to dwelle
Nought in purgatorie, but in helle.
Allas that ever knew I Perotheus!

For elles hadde I dwelled with Theseus
Y-fetered in his prisoun everemo.
Than hadde I been in blisse, and nat in wo.
Only the sighte of hir whom that I serve,
Though that I never hir grace may deserve,
Wolde han suffised right ynough for me.
O dere cosin Palamon,' quod he,
'Thyn is the victorie of this aventure,
Ful blisfully in prisoun maistow dure;
In prisoun? certes nay, but in paradys!
Wel hath Fortune y-turned thee the dys,
That hast the sight of hir, and I thabsence.
For possible is, sin thou hast hir presence,
And art a knight, a worthy and an able,
That by som cas, sin Fortune is chaungeable,
Thou maist to thy desyr somtime atteyne.
But I, that am exiled and bareyne
Of alle grace and in so greet despeir,
That ther nis erthe, water, fyr, ne eir,
Ne creature,° that of hem maked is,
That may me helpe or doon confort in this—
Wel oughte I sterve in wanhope and distresse;
Farwel my lyf, my lust and my gladnesse.
'Allas, why pleynen folk so in commune
Of purveyaunce of God or of fortune,

That yeveth hem ful ofte in many a gise
Wel bettre than they can hemself devise?
Som man desireth for to han richesse,
That cause is of his mordre or greet siknesse.
And som man wolde out of his prisoun fayn,
That in his hous is of his meynee slayn.
Infinite harmes been in this matere°;
We witen nat what thing we prayen here.
We faren as he that dronke is as a mous°;
A dronke man wot wel he hath an hous,
But he noot which the righte wey is thider;
And to a dronke man the wey is slider;
And certes in this world so faren we;
We seken faste after felicitee,
But we goon wrong ful often trewely.
Thus may we seyen alle, and namely I,
That weende and hadde a greet opinioun
That if I mighte escapen from prisoun,
Than hadde I been in joye and perfit hele,
Ther now I am exiled fro my wele.
Sin that I may nat seen yow, Emelye,
I nam but deed; ther nis no remedye.'
Upon that other side Palamon,
Whan that he wiste Arcite was agon,
Swich sorwe he maketh that the grete tour

Resouneth of his youling and clamour.
The pure fettres on his shines grete°
Weren of his bittre, salte teres wete.
'Allas!' quod he, 'Arcita, cosin myn,
Of al our stryf, God woot, the fruyt is thyn.
Thow walkest now in Thebes at thy large,°
And of my wo thou yevest litel charge.°
Thou mayst, sin thou hast wisdom and manhede,
Assemblen alle the folk of our kinrede,
And make a werre so sharpe° on this citee,
That by som aventure or som tretee
Thou mayst have hir to lady and to wyf
For whom that I most nedes lese my lyf.
For, as by wey of possibilitee,
Sith thou art at thy large, of prisoun free,
And art a lord, greet is thyn avauntage,
More than is myn, that sterve here in a cage.
For I mot wepe and wayle, whyl I live,
With al the wo that prisoun may me yive,
And eek with peyne that love me yiveth also,
That doubleth al my torment and my wo.'
Therwith the fyr of jalousye up-sterte
Withinne his brest and hente him by the herte
So woodly that he lyk was to biholde°
The box-tree, or the ashen dede and colde.

Than seyde he, 'O cruel goddes, that governe
This world with binding of your word eterne,
And writen in the table of athamaunt
Your parlement and your eterne graunt,
What is mankinde more unto yow holde°
Than is the sheep that rouketh in the folde?
For slayn is man right as another beest,
And dwelleth eek in prisoun and arreest,
And hath siknesse and greet adversitee,
And ofte times giltelees, pardee.
'What governaunce is in this prescience,
That giltelees tormenteth innocence?
And yet encreseth this al my penaunce,
That man is bounden to his observaunce
For Goddes sake to letten of his wille°
Ther as a beest may al his lust fulfille.
And whan a beest is deed he hath no peyne;
But man after his deeth moot wepe and pleyne,
Though in this world he have care and wo—
Withouten doute it may stonden so.
The answere of this I lete to divinis,
But wel I woot that in this world gret pine is.
Allas, I se a serpent or a theef,
That many a trewe man hath doon mescheef,
Goon at his large, and wher him list may turne;

But I moot been in prison thurgh Saturne,
And eek thurgh Juno, jalous and eek wood,
That hath destroyed wel ny al the blood
Of Thebes, with his waste walles wide.
And Venus sleeth me on that other side
For jalousye and fere of him Arcite.'
Now wol I stinte of Palamon a lite
And lete him in his prison stille dwelle,
And of Arcita forth I wol yow telle.
The somer passeth, and the nightes longe
Encresen double wise the peynes stronge
Bothe of the lovere and the prisoner.
I noot which hath the wofuller mester.
For shortly for to seyn, this Palamoun
Perpetuelly is dampned to prisoun
In cheynes and in fettres to been deed°;
And Arcite is exiled upon his heed°
For everemo as out of that contree,
Ne neveremo he shal his lady see.
Now loveres axe I now this questioun,
Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamoun?
That oon may seen his lady day by day,
But in prisoun moot he dwelle alway;
That other wher him list may ride or go.
But seen his lady shal he neveremo.

Now demeth as yow liste, ye that can,
For I wol telle forth as I bigan.

Explicit prima pars. Sequitur pars secunda.

Whan that Arcite to Thebes comen was,
Ful ofte a day he swelte and seyde 'Allas,'
For seen his lady shal he neveremo.
And shortly to concluden al his wo,
So muche sorwe hadde never creature
That is, or shal, whyl that the world may dure.
His sleep, his mete, his drinke is him biraft,
That lene he wex and drye as is a shaft.
His eyen holwe and grisly to biholde,
His hewe falwe and pale as ashen colde,
And solitarie he was, and evere allone,
And wailling al the night, making his mone.
And if he herde song or instrument,
Than wolde he wepe, he mighte nat be stent.
So feble eek were his spirits and so lowe,
And chaunged so, that no man coude knowe
His speche nor his voys, though men it herde.
And in his gere, for al the world he ferde
Nat only lyk the loveres maladye
Of Hereos, but rather lyk manye
Engendred of humour malencolik,

Biforen in his celle fantastik.
And, shortly, turned was al up-so-doun
Bothe habit and eek disposicioun
Of him, this woful lovere, daun Arcite.
What sholde I alday of his wo endite?
Whan he endured hadde a yeer or two
This cruel torment and this peyne and wo,
At Thebes, in his contree, as I seyde,
Upon a night, in sleep as he him leyde,
Him thoughte° how that the winged god Mercurie
Biforn him stood and bad him to be murie.
His slepy yerde in hond he bar uprighte;
An hat he werede upon his heres brighte.
Arrayed was this god (as he took keep°),
As he was whan that Argus took his sleep°;
And seyde him thus, 'To Atthenes shaltow wende,
Ther is thee shapen of thy wo an ende.'
And with that word Arcite wook and sterte.
'Now trewely, how sore that me smerte,'
Quod he, 'to Atthenes right now wol I fare;
Ne for the drede of deeth shal I nat spare
To see my lady that I love and serve;
In hir presence I recche nat to sterve.'
And with that word he caughte a greet mirour,
And saugh that chaunged was al his colour,

And saugh his visage al in another kinde.
And right anon it ran him in his minde,°
That, sith his face was so disfigured
Of maladye the which he hadde endured,
He mighte wel, if that he bar him lowe,
Live in Atthenes everemore unknowe,
And seen his lady wel ny day by day.
And right anon he chaungęde his array,
And cladde him as a povre laborer,
And al allone, save oonly a squyer,
That knew his privetee and al his cas,
Which was disgised povrely, as he was,
To Atthenes is he goon the nexte way.
And to the court he wente upon a day,
And at the gate he profreth his servise
To drugge and drawe, what so men wol devise.°
And shortly of this matere for to seyn,
He fil in office with a chamberleyn,
The which that° dwellinge was with Emelye;
For he was wys end coude sone aspye
Of every servaunt which that serveth here.
Wel coude he hewen wode, and water bere,
For he was yong and mighty for the nones,
And therto he was strong and big of bones
To doon that any wight can him devise.

A yeer or two he was in this servise,
Page of the chambre of Emelye the brighte;
And Philostrate he seyde that he highte.
But half so wel biloved a man as he
Ne was ther nevere in court, of his degree;
He was so gentil of condicioun,°
That thurghout al the court was his renoun.
They seyden that it were a charitee
That Theseus wolde enhauncen his degree,
And putten him in worshipful servise,
Ther as he mighte his vertu excercise.
And thus withinne a while his name is spronge
Bothe of his dedes and his gode tonge
That Theseus hath taken him so neer
That of his chambre he made him a squyer,
And yaf him gold to mayntene his degree.
And eek men broughte him out of his contree
From yeer to yeer ful prively his rente;
But honestly and slily he it spente,
That no man wondred how that he it hadde.
And thre yeer in this wise his lyf he ladde,
And bar him so in pees and eek in werre,
Ther nas no man that Theseus hath derre.°
And in this blisse lete I now Arcite
And speke I wol of Palamon a lite.

In derknesse and horrible and strong prisoun
This seven yeer hath seten Palamoun
Forpined what° for wo and for distresse.
Who feleth double soor and hevinesse
But Palamon, that love destreyneth so
That wood out of his wit he goth for wo!
And eek therto he is a prisoner
Perpetuelly, nought only for a yeer.
Who coude rime in English proprely
His martirdom? for sothe it am nat I°:
Therefore I passe as lightly as I may.
It fel that in the seventhe yeer, in May,
The thridde night (as olde bokes seyn,
That al this storie tellen more pleyn)
Were it by aventure or destinee, —
As, whan a thing is shapen, it shal be,° —
That sone after the midnight Palamoun
By helping of a freend brak his prisoun,
And fleeth the citee faste as he may go;
For he had yeve his gayler drinke so
Of a clarree, maad of a certeyn wyn,
With nercotikes and opie of Thebes fyn,
That al that night, though that men wolde him shak
The gayler sleep, he mighte nat awake;
And thus he fleeth as faste as ever he may.

The night was short and faste by the day,
That nedes-cost he moste himselven hide,
And til a grove faste ther biside
With dredful foot than stalketh Palamoun.
For shortly, this was his opinioun,
That in that grove he wolde him hide al day,
And in the night than wolde he take his way
To Thebes-ward, his freendes for to preye
On Theseus to helpe him to werreye;
And shortly, outher he wolde lese his lyf,
Or winnen Emelye unto his wyf;
This is theffect and his entente pleyn.
Now wol I turne unto Arcite ageyn,
That litel wiste how ny that° was his care,
Til that fortune had brought him in the snare.
The bisy larke, messager of day,°
Salueth in hir song the morwe gray;
And firy Phebus riseth up so brighte
That al the orient laugheth of the lighte,°
And with his stremes° dryeth in the greves
The silver dropes hanging on the leves.
And Arcita, that is in the court royal
With Theseus, his squyer principal,
Is risen and loketh on the merie day.
And, for to doon his observaunce to May,

Remembringe on the poynt of his desyr,°
He on a courser, startlinge as the fyr,
Is riden into the feeldes him to pleye,
Out of the court, were° it a mile or tweye;
And to the grove of which that I yow tolde
By aventure his wey he gan to holde,
To maken him a gerland of the greves,
Were it of wodebinde or hawethorn leves;
And loude he song ageyn the sonne shene°:
'May, with alle thy floures and thy grene
Welcome be thou, faire freshe May,
I hope that I som grene gete may.'
And from his courser with a lusty herte
Into the grove ful hastily he sterte,
And in a path he rometh up and doun,
Ther as by aventure this Palamoun
Was in a bush, that no man mighte him see,
For sore afered of his deeth was he.
Nothing ne knew he that it was Arcite;
God wot he wolde have trowed it ful lite.
But sooth is seyd, gon sithen many yeres,°
That feeld hath eyen and the wode hath eres.°
It is ful fair a man to bere him evene,
For alday meteth men at unset stevene.°
Ful litel wot Arcite of his felawe,

That was so ny to herknen al his sawe,
For in the bush he sitteth now ful stille.
Whan that Arcite hadde romed al his fille,
And songen al the roundel lustily,
Into a studie he fil sodeynly,
As doon thise loveres in hir queynte geres,
Now in the croppe, now doun in the breres,
Now up, now doun, as boket in a welle.
Right as the Friday,° soothly for to telle,
Now it shineth, now it reyneth faste, —
Right so can gery Venus overcaste
The hertes of hir folk; right as hir day
Is gerful, right so chaungeth she array.
'Selde is the Friday al the wike ylike.'
Whan that Arcite had songe, he gan to sike,
And sette him doun withouten any more:
'Allas,' quod he, 'that day that I was bore!
How longe, Juno, thurgh thy crueltee,
Woltow werreyen Thebes the citee?
Allas, y-brought is to confusioun
The blood royal of Cadme and Amphioun, —
Of Cadmus, which that was the firste man
That Thebes bulte, or first the toun bigan,
And of the citee first was crouned king.
Of his linage am I and his ofspring

By verray ligne as of the stok royal;
And now I am so caitif and so thral,
That he that is my mortal enemy,
I serve him as his squyer povrely.
And yet doth Juno me wel more shame,
For I dar nought biknowe myn owene name,
But ther as I was wont to highte Arcite,
Now highte I Philostrate, nought worth a mite.
Allas, thou felle Mars! allas, Juno!
Thus hath your ire our kinrede al fordo
Save only me and wrecched Palamoun,
That Theseus martireth in prisoun.
And over al this, to sleen me outrely,
Love hath his firy dart so brenningly
Y-stiked thurgh my trewe, careful herte,
That shapen was my deeth erst than my sherte.°
Ye sleen me with your eyen, Emelye!
Ye been the cause wherfor that I dye!
Of al the remenant of myn other care
Ne sette I nat the mountaunce of a tare,
So that I coude doon aught to your plesaunce.'
And with that word he fil doun in a traunce
A longe time; and afterward he upsterte.
This Palamoun, that thoughte that thurgh his he
He felte a cold swerd sodeynliche glide,

For ire he quook, no lenger wolde he bide.
And whan that he had herd Arcites tale,
As he were wood, with face deed and pale,
He sterte him up out of the buskes thikke,
And seyde, 'Arcite, false traitour wikke,
Now artow hent, that lovest my lady so
For whom that I have al this peyne and wo;
And art my blood, and to my counseil sworn,
As I ful ofte have told thee heer-biforn;
And hast bi-japed heer duk Theseus,
And falsly chaunged hast thy name thus;—
I wol be deed, or elles thou shalt dye.
Thou shalt nat love my lady Emelye,
But I wol love hir only and namo°;
For I am Palamoun, thy mortal fo.
And though that I no wepne have in this place,
But out of prisoun am astert by grace,
I drede nought that outher thou shalt dye,
Or thou ne shalt nat loven Emelye.
Chees which thou wolt, or thou shalt nat asterte.'
This Arcite, with ful despitous herte,
Whan he him knew and hadde his tale herd,
As fiers as leoun, pulled out a swerd,
And seyde thus, 'By God that sit above,
Nere it that thou art syk and wood for love,

And eek that thou no wepne hast in this place,
Thou sholdest nevere out of this grove pace,
That thou ne sholdest dyen of myn hond.°
For I defye the seuretee and the bond
Which that thou seyst that I have maad to thee.
What, verray fool, think wel that love is free!
And I wol love hir maugre al thy might.
But, for as muche as thou art a worthy knight
And wilnest to darreyne hir by bataille,
Have heer my trouthe, tomorwe I wol nat faille,
Withouten witing of any other wight,
That heer I wol be founden as a knight,
And bringen harneys right ynough for thee;
And chees° the beste and leve the worste for me.
And mete and drinke this night wol I bringe
Ynough for thee, and clothes for thy beddinge.
And, if so be that thou my lady winne
And sle me in this wode ther I am inne,
Thou mayst wel have thy lady as for me.'
This Palamon answerde, 'I graunte it thee.'
And thus they been departed til amorwe,
When ech of hem had leyd his feith to borwe.°
O Cupide, out of alle charitee°!
O regne that wolt no felawe have with thee!
Ful sooth is seyd° that love ne lordshipe

Wol nought, his thankes,° have no felaweshipe;
Wel finden that Arcite and Palamoun!
Arcite is riden anon unto the toun,
And on the morwe, er it were dayes light,
Ful prively two harneys hath he dight,
Bothe suffisaunt and mete to darreyne
The bataille in the feeld bitwix hem tweyne.
And on his hors, allone as he was born,
He carieth al this harneys him biforn;
And in the grove at time and place y-set
This Arcite and this Palamon ben met.
Tho chaungen gan the colour in hir f.ce;
Right as the hunters in the regne of Trace,
That stondeth at the gappe with a spere,
Whan hunted is the leoun or the bere,
And hereth him come rushing in the greves,
And breketh° bothe bowes and the leves,
And thinketh,° 'heer cometh my mortel enemy,
Withoute faile he moot be deed or I;
For outher I moot sleen him at the gappe,
Or he moot sleen me, if that me mishappe.'
So ferden they in chaunging of hir hewe,
As fer as everich of hem other knewe.°
Ther nas no 'Good day,' ne no saluing;
But streight withouten word or rehersing,

Everich of hem heelp for to armen other,
As frendly as he were his owene brother;
And after that with sharpe speres stronge
They foynen ech at other wonder longe.
Thou mightest wene that this Palamoun
In his fighting were a wood leoun,
And as a cruel tigre was Arcite.
As wilde bores gonne they to smite,
That frothen white as foom for ire wood.
Up to the ancle foughte they in hir blood.°
And in this wise I lete hem fighting dwelle;
And forth I wol of Theseus yow telle.
The Destinee, Ministre General,
That executeth in the world over-al
The purveyaunce that God hath seyn biforn,°
So strong it is that, though the world had sworn
The contrarie of a thing by ye or nay,
Yet somtime it shal fallen on a day
That falleth nat eft withinne a thousand yere.
For certeynly oure appetites here,
Be it of werre or pees or hate or love, —
Al is this reuled by the sighte above.
This mene I now by mighty Theseus,°
That for to honten is so desirous,
And namely at the grete hert in May,

That in his bed ther daweth him no day,
That he nis clad, and redy for to ride
With hunte and horn, and houndes him biside.
For in his hunting hath he swich delyt,
That it is al his joye and appetyt
To been himself the grete hertes bane;
For after Mars he serveth now Diane.
Cleer was the day, as I have told er this,
And Theseus, with alle joye and blis,
With his Ipolita, the faire quene,
And Emelye, clothed al in grene,
On hunting be they riden royally.
And to the grove, that stood ful faste by,
In which ther was an hert, as men him tolde,
Duk Theseus the streighte wey hath holde.
And to the launde he rideth him ful right,
For thider was the hert wont have his flight,
And over a brook, and so forth on his weye.
This duk wol han a cours at him or tweye
With houndes swiche as that him list comaunde.
And whan this duk was come unto the launde,
Under the sonne° he loketh, and anon
He was war of Arcite and Palamon,
That foughten breme, as it were bores two.
The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro

So hidously, that with the leeste strook
It semed as it wolde felle an ook;
But what they were, nothing he ne woot.
This duk his courser with his spores smoot,
And at a stert he was bitwix hem two,
And pulled out a swerd and cride, 'Ho!
Namore, up peyne° of lesing of your heed!
By mighty Mars, he shal anon be deed
That smiteth any strook that I may seen!
But telleth me what mister men ye been,
That been so hardy for to fighten here
Withouten juge or other officere,
As it were in a listes° royally?'
This Palamon answerde hastily,
And seyde, 'Sire, what nedeth wordes mo°?
We have the deeth deserved bothe two.
Two woful wrecches been we, two caytives,
That been encombred of our owene lives;
And as thou art a rightful lord and juge,
Ne yeve us neither mercy ne refuge,
But sle me first for seynte charitee,
But sle my felawe eek as wel as me;
Or sle him first; for, though thou knowest it lite,
This is thy mortal fo, this is Arcite,
That fro thy lond is banished on his heed,

For which he hath deserved to be deed.
For this is he that cam unto thy gate
And seyde that he highte Philostrate.
Thus hath he japed thee ful many a yeer,
And thou has maked him thy chief squyer;
And this is he that loveth Emelye.
For sith the day is come that I shal dye,
I make pleynly my confessioun,
That I am thilke woful Palamoun,
That hath thy prisoun broken wikkedly.
I am thy mortal foo, and it am I°
That loveth so hote Emelya the brighte,
That I wol dye present in hir sighte.
Therfore I axe deeth and my juwise;
But sle my felawe in the same wise,
For bothe han we deserved to be slayn.'
This worthy duk answerde anon agayn,
And seide, 'This is a short conclusioun:
Youre owene mouth by your confessioun
Hath dampned you, and I wol it recorde,
It nedeth nought to pine yow with the corde;
Ye shul be deed, by mighty Mars the rede!'
The quene anon, for verray wommanhede
Gan for to wepe, and so dide Emelye,
And alle the ladies in the compaignye.

Gret pitee was it, as it thoughte hem alle,
That evere swich a chaunce sholde falle;
For gentil men they were of greet estat,
And nothing but for love was this debat.
And sawe° hir blody woundes wide and sore;
And alle criden bothe lasse and more,
'Have mercy, Lord, upon us wommen alle!'
And on hir bare knees adoun they falle,
And wolde have kist his feet ther as he stood,
Til at the laste aslaked was his mood;
For pitee renneth sone in gentil herte.°
And though he firste for ire quook and sterte,
He hath considered shortly in a clause
The trespas of hem bothe, and eek the cause.
And although that his ire hir gilt accused,
Yet in his resoun he hem bothe excused;
And thus he thoughte wel that every man
Wol helpe himself in love, if that he can,
And eek delivere himself out of prisoun;
And eek his herte hadde compassioun
Of wommen, for they wepen evere in oon;
And in his gentil herte he thoughte anoon,
And softe unto himself he seyde, 'Fy
Upon a lord that wol have no mercy,
But been a leoun, bothe in word and dede,

To hem that been in repentaunce and drede,
As wel as to a proud despitous man
That wol maynteyne that he first bigan!
That lord hath litel of discrecioun,
That in swich cas can° no divisioun,
But weyeth pride and humblesse after oon.°'
And shortly, whan his ire is thus agoon,
He gan to loken up with eyen lighte,
And spak thise same wordes al on highte:
'The god of love, A! *benedicite°!*
How mighty and how greet a lord is he!
Ayeyns his might ther gayneth none obstacles,
He may be cleped a god for his miracles;
For he can maken at his owene gise
Of everich herte, as that him list devise.
Lo heer this Arcite and this Palamoun,
That quitly weren out of my prisoun,
And mighte han lived in Thebes royally,
And witen I am hir mortal enemy,
And that hir deeth lith in my might also;
And yet hath love, maugree hir eyen two,
Y-brought hem hider bothe for to dye!
Now loketh, is nat that an heigh folye?
"Who may been a fool, but if he love?°"
Bihold, for Goddes sake that sit above,

Se how they blede! be they nought wel arrayed?
Thus hath hir lord, the god of love, y-payed
Hir wages and hir fees for hir servise!
And yet they wenen for to been ful wise
That serven love, for aught that may bifalle!
But this is yet the beste game of alle,
That she, for whom they han this jolitee,
Can hem therfor as muche thank as me°;
She woot namore of al this hote fare,
By God, than woot a cokkow or an hare!
"But al moot been assayed, hoot and cold;
A man moot been a fool, or yong or old;"
I woot it by myself ful yore agoon;
For in my time a servant was I oon.°
And therfor, sin I knowe of loves peyne,
And woot how sore it can a man distreyne,
As he that hath ben caught ofte in his las,
I yow foryeve al hoolly this trespas,
At requeste of the quene, that kneleth here,
And eek of Emelye, my suster dere.
And ye shul bothe anon unto me swere,
That neveremo ye shul my contree dere,
Ne make werre upon me night ne day,
But been my freendes in al that ye may;
I yow foryeve this trespas every deel.'

And they him swore his axing fayre and weel,
And him of lordshipe and of mercy preyde;°
And he hem graunteth grace, and thus he seyde:
'To speke of° royal linage and richesse,
Though that she were a quene or a princesse,
Ech of yow bothe is worthy, doutelees,
To wedden whan time is, but nathelees
(I speke as for my suster Emelye,
For whom ye have this stryf and jalousye),
Ye woot yourself she may not wedden two
At ones, though ye fighten evermo,—
That oon of yow, al be him looth or lief,°
He moot go pipen in an ivy leef;
This is to seyn, she may nat now han bothe,
Al be ye never so jalous ne so wrothe.
And for-thy I yow putte in this degree
That ech of yow shal have his destinee
As him is shape; and herkneth in what wise,
Lo heer your ende of that I shal devise.
My wil is this, for plat conclusioun
Withouten any replicacioun,—
If that yow liketh, tak it for the beste:
That everich of yow shal goon wher him leste
Frely, withouten raunsoun or daunger;
And this day fifty wikes, fer ne ner,°

Everich of yow shal bringe an hundred knightes,
Armed for listes up at alle rightes,°
Al redy to darreyne hir by bataille.
And this bihote I yow withouten faille
Upon my trouthe, and as I am a knight,
That whether of yow bothe that hath might,
This is to seyn, that whether he or thou
May with his hundred, as I spak of now,
Sleen his contrarie, or out of listes drive,—
Than shal I yeve Emelya to wive
To whom that fortune yeveth so fair a grace.
The listes shal I maken in this place,
And God so wisly on my soule rewe,
As I shal even juge been and trewe.
Ye shul non other ende with me maken,
That oon of yow ne shal be deed or taken.
And if yow thinketh this is wel y-sayd,
Seyth your avys and holdeth yow apayd.
This is your ende and your conclusioun.'
Who loketh lightly now but Palamoun?
Who springeth up for joye but Arcite?
Who couthe telle, or who couthe it endite,
The joye that is maked in the place
Whan Theseus hath doon so fair a grace?
But doun on knees wente every maner wight,

And thanked him with al hir herte and might,
And namely the Thebans ofte sithe.
And thus with good hope and with herte blithe
They take hir leve, and homward gonne they ride
To Thebes with his olde walles wide.

Explicit secunda pars. Sequitur pars tercia.

I trowe men wolde deme it necligence,
If I foryete to tellen the dispence
Of Theseus, that goth so bisily
To maken up the listes royally;
That swich a noble theatre as it was,
I dar wel seyn that in this world ther nas.
The circuït a mile was aboute,
Walled of stoon and diched al withoute.
Round was the shap in manere of compas,
Ful of degrees the heighte of sixty pas,
That, whan a man was set on o degree,
He letted nat his felawe for to see.

Estward ther stood a gate of marbel whyt,
Westward right swich another in the opposyt.
And shortly to concluden, swich a place
Was noon in erthe as in so litel space;
For in the lond ther nas no crafty man
That geometrie or ars-metrike can,

Ne purtreyour ne kerver of images,
That Theseus ne yaf him mete and wages
The theatre for to maken and devise.
And for to doon his rite and sacrifise,
He estward hath upon the gate above,
In worship of Venus, goddesse of love,
Doon make° an auter and an oratorie;
And westward, in the minde and in memorie
Of Mars, he maked hath right swich another,
That coste largely of gold a fother.
And northward, in a touret on the wal,
Of alabastre whyt and reed coral
An oratorie riche for to see,
In worship of Diane of chastitee,
Hath Theseus don wrought° in noble wise.
But yet hadde I foryeten to devise
The noble kerving, and the portreytures,
The shap, the contenaunce, and the figures,
That weren in thise oratories thre.

First in the temple of Venus maystow se
Wrought on the wal, ful pitous to biholde,
The broken slepes and the sikes colde°,
The sacred teres and the waymentinge,
The firy strokes of the desiringe,
That loves servaunts in this lyf enduren;

The othes that hir covenants assuren;
Plesaunce and Hope, Desyr, Foolhardinesse,°
Beautee and Youthe, Bauderye, Richesse,
Charmes and Force, Lesinges, Flaterye,
Dispense, Bisinesse, and Jalousye,
That wered of yelwe goldes a gerland,
And a cokkow sittinge on hir hand;
Festes, instruments, caroles, daunces,
Lust and array, and alle the circumstaunces
Of love whiche that I rekne and rekne shal,
By ordre° weren peynted on the wal,
And mo than I can make of mencioun.
For soothly, al the mount of Citheroun,
Ther Venus hath hir principal dwellinge,
Was shewed on the wal in portreyinge,
With al the gardin and the lustinesse.
Nat was foryeten the porter Ydelnesse,
Ne Narcisus the faire of yore agon,°
Ne yet the folie of king Salamon,
Ne yet the grete strengthe of Ercules,
Thenchauntements of Medea and Circes,
Ne of Turnus, with the hardy fiers corage,
The riche Cresus, caytif in servage.
Thus may ye seen that Wisdom ne Richesse,
Beautee ne Sleighte, Strengthe ne Hardinesse,

Ne may with Venus holde champartye;
For as hir list the world than may she gye
Lo, alle thise folk so caught were in hir las
Til they for wo ful ofte seyde 'Allas!'
Suffiseth heer ensamples oon or two,
And though° I coude rekne a thousand mo.

* * * * * * *

A citole in hir right hand hadde she,
And on hir heed, ful semely for to se,
A rose gerland, fresh and wel smellinge°;
Above hir heed hir dowves flikeringe;
Biforn hir stood hir sone Cupido,
Upon his shuldres winges hadde he two;
And blind he was, as it is ofte sene;
A bowe he bar and arwes brighte and kene.
Why sholde I nought as wel eek telle yow al
The portreiture that was upon the wal
Within the temple of mighty Mars the rede?
Al peynted was the wal in lengthe and brede
Lyk to the estres of the grisly place
That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace,
In thilke colde frosty regioun
Ther as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun.

First on the wal was peynted a forest,
In which ther dwelleth neither man ne best,
With knotty, knarry, bareyne trees olde°
Of stubbes sharpe and hidouse to biholde;
In which ther ran a rumbel in a swough,
As though a storm sholde bresten every bough.
And downward from an hille, under a bente,
Ther stood the temple of Mars armipotente,
Wrought al of burned steel, of which the entree
Was long and streit, and gastly for to see.
And ther-out cam a rage and such a veze,
That it made al the gate for to rese.
The northren light° in at the dores shoon,
For windowe on the wal ne was ther noon
Thurgh which men mighten any light discerne.
The dores were alle of adamant eterne,
Y-clenched overthwart and endelong
With iren tough; and, for to make it strong,
Every piler, the temple to sustene,
Was tonne-greet, of iren bright and shene.
Ther saugh I first the derke imagining
Of Felonye, and al the compassing;
The cruel Ire,° reed as any glede;
The pikepurs,° and eek the pale Drede°;

The smiler with the knyf under the cloke;
The shepne brenninge with the blake smoke;
The tresoun of the mordringe in the bedde;
The Open Werre with woundes al bi-bledde;
Contek with blody knyf and sharp manace;
Al ful of chirking was that sory place.
The sleere of himself yet saugh I ther,°
His herte-blood hath bathed al his heer;
The nayl y-driven in the shode a-night,
The colde deeth with mouth gaping upright.
Amiddes of the temple sat Meschaunce,
With disconfort and sory contenaunce.
Yet saugh I Woodnesse laughinge in his rage;
Armed Compleynt, Outhees, and fiers Outrage;
The careyne in the busk with throte y-corve:
A thousand slayn and nat of qualm y-storve;
The tiraunt with the prey by force y-raft;
The toun destroyed, ther was nothing laft.
Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppesteres°;
The hunte strangled with the wilde beres;
The sowe freten the child right in the cradel;
The cook y-scalded for al his longe ladel.
Nought was foryeten by the infortune of Marte°;
The carter over-riden with his carte,
Under the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun.

Ther were also of Martes divisioun
The barbour and the bocher and the smith
That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his stith.
And al above, depeynted in a tour,
Saw I Conquest sittinge in greet honour,
With the sharpe swerde over his heed°
Hanging by a sotil twines threed.
Depeynted was the slaughtre of Julius,
Of grete Nero, and of Antonius;
Al be that thilke time they were unborn
Yet was hir deeth depeynted ther-biforn,
By manasinge of Mars,° right by figure;
So was it shewed in that portreiture
As is depeynted in the sterres above
Who shal be slayn or elles deed for love.
Suffiseth oon ensample° in stories olde,
I may not rekene hem alle though I wolde.
The statue of Mars upon a carte stood,
Armed, and loked grim as he were wood;
And overe his heed ther shinen two figures
Of sterres, that been cleped in scriptures,
That oon Puella,° that other Rubeus.°
This god of armes was arrayed thus:
A wolf ther stood biforn him at his feet
With eyen rede, and of a man he eet:

With sotil pencel depeynted was this storie,
In redoutinge of Mars and of his glorie.
Now to the temple of Diane the chaste
As shortly as I can I wol me haste,
To telle yow al the descripcioun.
Depeynted been the walles up and doun
Of hunting and of shamfast chastitee.
Ther saugh I how woful Calistopee,
Whan that Diane agreved was with here,
Was turned from a womman to a bere,
And after was she maad the lode-sterre°;
Thus was it peynted, I can say yow no ferre.
Hir sone is eek a sterre, as men may se.
Ther saugh I Dane, y-turned til a tree,—
I mene nat the goddesse Diane,
But Penneus doughter which that highte Dane.
Ther saugh I Attheon an hert y-maked,
For vengeaunce that he saugh Diane al naked;
I saugh how that his houndes have him caught
And freten him, for that they knewe him naught.
Yet peynted was a litel forther-moor,
How Atthalante hunted the wilde boor,
And Meleagre, and many another mo,
For which Diane wroughte him care and wo.

Ther saugh I many another wonder storie,
The whiche me list nat drawen to memorie.
This goddesse on an hert ful hye seet,
With smale houndes al aboute hir feet;
And undernethe hir feet she hadde a mone,
Wexing it was, and sholde wanie sone.
In gaude grene hir statue clothed was,
With bowe in honde and arwes in a cas.
Hir eyen caste she ful lowe adoun,
Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.

* * * * * * *

Wel couthe he peynten lyfly that it wroughte,
With many a florin he the hewes boughte.
Now been thise listes maad, and Theseus,
That at his grete cost arrayed thus
The temples and the theatre every del,
Whan it was doon, him liked wonder wel.
But stinte I wol of Theseus a lite,
And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.
The day approcheth of hir retourninge,
That everich sholde an hundred knightes bringe,
The bataille to darreyne, as I yow tolde;
And til Atthenes, hir covenant for to holde,

Hath everich of hem brought an hundred knightes
Wel armed for the werre at alle rightes.
And sikerly ther trowed many a man
That never, sithen that the world bigan,
As for to speke of knighthod, of hir hond,°
As fer as God hath maked see or lond,
Nas, of so fewe, so noble a compaignye.
For every wight that loved chivalrye,
And wolde, his thankes, han a passant name,
Hath preyed that he mighte ben of that game;
And wel was him, that therto chosen was.
For if ther fille tomorwe swich a cas,
Ye knowen wel that every lusty knight
That loveth paramours and hath his might,
Were it in Engelond or elleswhere,
They wolde, hir thankes, wilnen to be there.
To fighte for a lady, — *ben'dic'te!*
It were a lusty sighte for to see!
And right so ferden they with Palamon;
With him ther wenten knightes many oon.
Som wol ben armed in an habergeoun,
And in a brest-plate and in a light gipoun;
And somme woln have a peyre plates large;
And somme woln have a Pruce sheld or a targe;
Somme woln been armed on hir legges weel,

And have an ax and somme a mace of steel.
Ther nis no newe gise that it nas old.°
Armed were they, as I have you told,
Everich after his opinioun.
Ther maistow seen cominge with Palamoun
Lygurge himself, the grete king of Trace.
Blak was his berd, and manly was his face;
The cercles of his eyen in his heed,
They gloweden bitwixe yelow and reed;
And lyk a griffon looked he aboute,
With kempe heres on his browes stoute;
His limes grete, his brawnes harde and stronge,
His shuldres brode, his armes rounde and longe.
And as the gise was in his contree,
Ful hye upon a char of gold stood he,
With foure white boles in the trays.
Instede of cote-armure over his harnays,
With nayles° yelwe, and brighte as any gold
He hadde a beres skin, col-blak, for-old.
His longe heer was kembd bihinde his bak,
As any ravenes fether it shoon for-blak;
A wrethe of gold arm-greet, of huge wighte,
Upon his heed, set ful of stones brighte,
Of fine rubies and of diamaunts.
Aboute his char ther wenten white alaunts

Twenty and mo, as grete as any steer,
To hunten at the leoun or the deer,
And folwed him with mosel faste y-bounde,
Colered of golde, and torets filed rounde.
An hundred lordes hadde he in his route
Armed ful wel, with hertes sterne and stoute.
With Arcita, in stories as men finde,
The grete Emetreus, the king of Inde,
Upon a stede bay trapped in steel,
Covered in cloth of gold diapred wel,
Cam riding lyk the god of armes, Mars.
His cote-armure was of cloth of Tars,°
Couched with perles white and rounde and grete;
His sadel was of brend gold newe y-bete;
A mantelet upon his shuldre hanginge
Bret-ful of rubies rede, as fyr sparklinge.
His crispe heer lyk ringes was y-ronne,
And that was yelow and glitered as the sonne,
His nose was heigh, his eyen bright citryn,
His lippes rounde, his colour was sangwyn;
A fewe fraknes in his face y-spreynd,
Betwixen yelow and somdel blak y-meynd;
And as a leoun he his loking caste.
Of five and twenty yeer his age I caste.
His berd was wel bigonne for to springe;

His voys was as a trompe thunderinge.
Upon his heed he wered of laurer grene
A gerlond fresh and lusty for to sene.
Upon his hand he bar for his deduyt
An egle tame, as eny lilie whyt.
An hundred lordes hadde he with him there,
Al armed sauf hir heddes in al hir gere,
Ful richely in alle maner thinges.
For trusteth wel that dukes, erles, kinges,
Were gadered in this noble compaignye,
For love, and for encrees of chivalrye.
Aboute this king ther ran on every part
Ful many a tame leoun and leopart.
And in this wise thise lordes alle and some°
Been on the Sonday to the citee come
Aboute prime and in the toun alight.
This Theseus, this duk, this worthy knight,
Whan he had brought hem into his citee,
And inned hem, everich at his degree,
He festeth hem, and doth so greet labour
To esen hem and doon hem al honour,
That yet men weneth that no mannes wit
Of noon estat ne coude amenden it.
The minstralcye, the service at the feeste,
The grete yiftes to the moste and leeste.

The riche array of Theseus paleys,
Ne who sat first ne last upon the deys,
What ladies fairest been or best daunsinge,
Or which of hem can dauncen best and singe,
Ne who most felingly speketh of love,
What haukes sitten on the perche above,
What houndes liggen on the floor adoun, —
Of al this make I now no mencioun,
But al theffect, that thinketh me the beste;
Now cometh the poynt, and herkneth if yow leste.
The Sonday night, er day bigan to springe,
When Palamon the larke herde singe
(Although it nere nat day by houres two,
Yet song the larke, and Palamon also),
With holy herte and with an heigh corage
He roos to wenden on his pilgrimage
Unto the blisful Citherea benigne, —
I mene Venus, honurable and digne.
And in hir houre° he walketh forth a pas
Unto the listes, ther hir temple was,
And doun he kneleth and with humble chere
And herte soor, he seyde as ye shul here.
'Faireste of faire, o lady myn Venus,
Doughter of Jove and spouse to Vulcanus,
Thou gladere of the mount of Citheroun,

For thilke love thou haddest to Adoun,
Have pitee of my bittre teres smerte,
And tak myn humble preyere at thyn herte.
Allas! I ne have no langage to telle
Theffectes ne the torments of myn helle;
Myn herte may mine harmes nat biwreye;
I am so confus that I can nought seye.
But mercy, lady bright, that knowest wele
My thought and seest what harmes that I fele;
Considere al this and rewe upon my sore,
As wisly as I shal for evermore
Emforth my might thy trewe servant be,
And holden werre alway with chastitee;
That make I myn avow, so ye me helpe.
I kepe nought of armes for to yelpe,°
Ne I ne axe nat tomorwe to have victorie,
Ne renoun in this cas, ne veyne glorie
Of prys of armes blowen° up and doun;
But I wolde have fully possessioun
Of Emelye, and dye in thy servise;
Find thou the maner how, and in what wise.
I recche nat,° but it may bettre be,
To have victorie of hem or they of me,
So that I have my lady in mine armes.
For though so be that Mars is god of armes,

Your vertu is so greet in hevene above
That if yow list I shal wel have my love.
Thy temple wol I worshipe evermo,
And on thyn auter, wher I ride or go,
I wol doon sacrifice and fires bete.
And if ye wol nat so, my lady swete,
Than preye I thee, tomorwe with a spere
That Arcita me thurgh the herte bere.
Than rekke I nought, whan I have lost my lyf,
Though that Arcita winne hir to his wyf.
This is the effect and ende of my preyere:
Yif me my love, thou blisful lady dere.'
Whan the orisoun was doon of Palamon,
His sacrifice he dide, and that anon,
Ful pitously with alle circumstaunces,
Al telle I nought as now his observaunces.
But atte laste the statue of Venus shook
And made a signe, wherby that he took
That his preyere accepted was that day.
For though the signe shewed a delay,
Yet wiste he wel that graunted was his bone;
And with glad herte he wente him hoom ful sone.
The thridde houre inequal° that Palamon
Bigan to Venus temple for to gon,
Up roos the sonne and up roos Emelye,°

And to the temple of Diane gan hye.
Hir maydens that she thider with hir ladde
Ful redily with hem the fyr they hadde,
Thencens, the clothes, and the remenant al
That to the sacrifice longen shal;
The hornes fulle of meth, as was the gise;
Ther lakked nought to doon hir sacrifise.
Smokinge° the temple, ful of clothes faire,
This Emelye with herte debonaire
Hir body wesh with water of a welle;
But how she dide hir rite I dar nat telle
But it be any thing in general;
And yet it were a game° to heren al.
To him that meneth wel, it were no charge,°—
But it is good a man ben at his large.°
Hir brighte heer was kempt, untressed al;
A coroune of a grene ook cerial
Upon hir heed was set ful fair and mete.
Two fires on the auter gan she bete,
And dide hir thinges, as men may biholde
In Stace of Thebes, and thise bokes olde.°
Whan kindled was the fyr, with pitous chere
Unto Diane she spak as ye may here.
'O chaste goddesse of the wodes grene,
To whom bothe hevene and erthe and see is sene,

Quene of the regne of Pluto derk and lowe,
Goddesse of maydens, that myn herte hast knowe
Ful many a yeer and woost what I desire,
As keep me fro thy vengeaunce and thyn ire,
That Attheon aboughte cruelly.
Chaste goddesse, wel wostow that I
Desire to been a mayden al my lyf,
Ne never wol I be no love ne wyf.
I am, thou woost, yet of thy compaignye,
A mayde, and love hunting° and venerye,°
And for to walken in the wodes wilde,
And nought to been a wyf and be with childe.
Nought wol I knowe compaignye of man.
Now help me, lady, sith ye may and can,
For tho thre formes° that thou hast in thee.
And Palamon, that hath swich love to me,
And eek Arcite, that loveth me so sore,
(This grace I preye thee withoute more)
As sende love and pees bitwixe hem two;
And fro me torn awey hir hertes so
That al hir hote love and hir desyr
And al hir bisy torment and hir fyr
Be queynt, or turned in another place.
And if so be thou wolt do me no grace,
Or if my destinee be shapen so,

That I shal nedes have oon of hem two,
As sende me him that most desireth me.
Bihold, goddesse of clene chastitee,
The bittre teres that on my chekes falle.
Sin thou art mayde, and kepere of us alle,
My maydenhode thou kepe and wel conserve,
And whyl I live a mayde, I wol thee serve.'
The fires brenne up on the auter clere,
Whil Emelye was thus in hir preyere;
But sodeynly she saugh a sighte queynte,
For right anon oon of the fires queynte,
And quiked agayn, and after that anon
That other fyr was queynt and al agon.
And as it queynte, it made a whistelinge,
As doon thise wete brondes in hir brenninge,
And at the brondes ende out-ran anoon
As it were blody dropes many oon.
For which so sore agast was Emelye,
That she was wel ny mad, and gan to crye;
For she ne wiste what it signifyed;
But only for the fere thus hath she cryed
And weep that it was pitee for to here.
And ther-with-al Diane gan appere,
With bowe in hond, right as an hunteresse,
And seyde, 'Doughter, stint thyn hevinesse.

Among the goddes hye it is affermed,
And by eterne word writen and confermed,
Thou shalt ben wedded unto oon of tho
That han for thee so muchel care and wo;
But unto which of hem I may nat telle.
Farwel, for I ne may no lenger dwelle,
The fires which that on myn auter brenne
Shul thee declaren, er that thou go henne,
Thyn aventure of love as in this cas.'
And with that word the arwes in the cas
Of the goddesse clateren faste and ringe,
And forth she wente and made a vanishinge;
For which this Emelye astoned was,
And seyde, 'What amounteth this, allas!
I putte me in thy protecciouN,
Diane, and in thy disposicioun.'
And hoom she goth anon the nexte weye.
This is theffect, ther nis namore to seye.
The nexte houre° of Mars folwinge this,
Arcite unto the temple walked is
Of fierse Mars, to doon his sacrifise
With alle the rites of his payen wise.
With pitous herte and heigh devocioun
Right thus to Mars he seyde his orisoun:
'O stronge god, that in the regnes colde
Of Trace honoured art and lord y-holde,

And hast in every regne and every lond
Of armes al the bridel in thyn hond,
And hem fortunest as thee list devise,
Accept of me my pitous sacrifise.
If so be that my youthe may deserve,
And that my might be worthy for to serve
Thy godhede, that I may ben oon of thine,
Than preye I thee to rewe upon my pine
For thilke peyne, and thilke hote fyr
In which thou whilom brendest for desyr,
* * * * * * *
For thilke sorwe that was in thyn herte,
Have routhe as wel upon my peynes smerte.
I am yong and unkonning, as thou wost,
And, as I trowe, with love offended most,
That evere was any lives creature;
For she that doth° me al this wo endure
Ne reccheth never wher I sinke or flete.
And wel I woot, er she me mercy hete,
I moot with strengthe winne hir in the place°;
And wel I woot, withouten help or grace
Of thee, ne may my strengthe nought availle.
Than help me, lord, tomorwe in my bataille,
For thilke fyr that whilom brente thee
As wel as thilke fyr now brenneth me;

And do° that I tomorwe have victorie.
Myn be the travaille, and thyn be the glorie!
Thy sovereyn temple wol I most honouren
Of any place, and alwey most labouren
In thy plesaunce and in thy craftes stronge;
And in thy temple I wol my baner honge
And alle the armes of my compaignye;
And everemo, unto that day I dye,
Eterne fyr I wol biforn thee finde.
And eek to this avow I wol me binde:
My berd, myn heer that hongeth long adoun,
That nevere yet ne felte offensioun
Of rasour nor of shere, I wol the yive,°
And been thy trewe servant whyl I live.
Now lord, have routhe upon my sorwes sore,
Yif me the victorie, I aske thee namore.'
The preyer stint of Arcita the stronge;
The ringes on the temple dore that honge,
And eek the dores, clatereden ful faste,
Of which Arcita somwhat him agaste.
The fires brende upon the auter brighte,
That it gan al the temple for to lighte;
And swete smel the ground anon up-yaf,
And Arcita anon his hand up-haf,
And more encens into the fyr he caste,

With othere rites mo; and atte laste
The statue of Mars bigan his hauberk ringe.
And with that soun he herde a murmuringe
Ful lowe and dim, that sayde thus, 'Victorie!'
For which he yaf to Mars honour and glorie.
And thus with joye and hope wel to fare
Arcite anon unto his inne is fare,
As fayn as fowel is of the brighte sonne.
And right anon swich stryf ther is bigonne
For thilke graunting, in the hevene above,
Bitwixe Venus, the goddesse of love,
And Mars, the sterne god armipotente,
That Jupiter was bisy it to stente;
Til that the pale Saturnus the colde,
That knew so many of aventures olde,
Fond in his olde experience an art
That he ful sone hath plesed every part.
As sooth is sayd, elde hath greet avantage;
In elde is bothe wisdom and usage;
'Men may the olde at-renne and nought at-rede.'
Saturne anon, to stinten stryf and drede,
Al be it that it is agayn his kinde,°
Of al this stryf he gan remedie finde.
'My dere doughter Venus,' quod Saturne,
'My cours, that hath so wide for to turne,°

Hath more power than wot any man.
Myn is the drenching in the see so wan,
Myn is the prison in the derke cote,
Myn is the strangling and hanging by the throte,
The murmure and the cherles rebelling,
The groyning and the prive empoysoning;
I do vengeance and pleyn correccioun,
Whyl I dwelle in the signe of the leoun.
Myn is the ruine of the hye halles,
The falling of the toures and of the walles
Upon the minour or the carpenter.
I slow Sampson shakinge the piler;
And mine be the maladyes colde,
The derke tresons and the castes olde;
My looking is the fader of pestilence.
Now weep namore, I shal doon diligence
That Palamon, that is thyn owene knight,
Shal have his lady, as thou hast him hight.
Though Mars shal helpe his knight, yet natheless
Bitwixe yow ther moot be som time pees,
Al be ye nought of o complexioun,
That causeth al day swich divisioun.
I am thyn aiel, redy at thy wille;
Weep thou namore, I wol thy lust fulfille.'
Now wol I stinten of the goddes above,

Of Mars, and of Venus, goddesse of love,
And telle yow as pleynly as I can
The grete effect for which that I bigan.

Explicit tercia pars. Sequitur pars quarta.

Greet was the feste in Atthenes that day,
And eek the lusty seson of that May
Made every wight to been in swich plesaunce,
That al that Monday justen they and daunce,
And spenden it in Venus heigh servise.
But by the cause that they sholde rise
Erly, for to seen the grete fight,
Unto hir reste wenten they at night.
And on the morwe, whan that day gan springe,
Of hors and harneys noyse and clateringe
Ther was in hostelryes al aboute;
And to the paleys rood ther many a route
Of lordes, upon stedes and palfreys.
Ther maystow seen devising of herneys
So uncouth and so riche, and wrought so weel
Of goldsmithrye, of browding, and of steel;
The sheeldes brighte, testeres, and trappures;
Gold-hewen helmes, hauberkes, cote-armures;
Lordes in paraments on hir courseres,
Knightes of retenue, and eek squyeres

Nailing the speres, and helmes bokelinge,
Gigginge of sheeldes, with layneres lacinge;
Ther as need is, they weren nothing idel;
The fomy stedes on the golden bridel
Gnawinge, and faste the armurers also
With file and hamer priking to and fro;
Yemen on fote, and communes many oon
With shorte staves, thikke as they may goon;
Pipes, trompes, nakers, clariounes,
That in the bataille blowen blody sounes;
The paleys ful of peples up and doun,
Heer thre, ther ten, holding hir questioun,
Divininge of thise Theban knightes two.
Somme seyden thus, somme seyde it shal be so;
Somme helden with him with the blake berd,
Somme with the balled, somme with the thikke-herd
Somme sayde, he° looked grim, and he° wolde fighte,
He° hath a sparth of twenty pound of wighte.
Thus was the halle ful of divininge,
Longe after that the sonne gan to springe.
The grete Theseus, that of his sleep awaked
With minstralcye and noyse that was maked,
Held yet the chambre of his paleys riche,
Til that the Theban knightes, both y-liche
Honoured, were into the paleys fet.

Duk Theseus was at a window set,
Arrayed right as he were a god in trone.
The peple presseth thider-ward ful sone
Him for to seen, and doon heigh reverence,
And eek to herkne his heste and his sentence.
An heraud on a scaffold made an 'Ho!'
Til al the noyse of the peple was y-do;
And whan he saugh the peple of noyse al stille,
Tho shewed he the mighty dukes wille.
'The lord hath of his heigh discrecioun
Considered that it were destruccioun
To gentil blood to fighten in the gise
Of mortal bataille now in this emprise;
Wherfor, to shapen that they shul not dye,
He wol his firste purpos modifye.
'No man therfor, up peyne of los of lyf,
No maner shot, ne pollax, ne short knyf
Into the listes sende, or thider bringe;
Ne short swerd for to stoke with poynt bitinge,
No man ne drawe, ne bere by his side.
Ne no man shal unto his felawe ride
But o cours with a sharp y-grounde spere;
Foyne, if him list, on fote, himself to were.
And he that is at meschief shal be take,
And nought slayn, but be brought unto the stake

That shal ben ordeyned on either side;
But thider he shal by force, and ther abide.
'And if so falle, the chevetayn be take
On either side, or elles sleen his make,
No lenger shal the turneyinge laste.
God spede yow; goth forth, and ley on faste.
With long swerd and with maces fighteth your fille.
Goth now your wey; this is the lordes wille.'
The voys of peple touchede the hevene,
So loude criden they with mery stevene:
'God save swich a lord, that is so good,
He wilneth no destruccioun of blood!'
Up goon the trompes and the melodye,
And to the listes rit the compaignye
By ordinaunce thurghout the citee large,
Hanged with cloth of gold, and nat with sarge.
Ful lyk a lord this noble duk gan ride,
Thise two Thebanes upon either side;
And after rood the quene and Emelye,
And after that another compaignye
Of oon and other, after hir degree;
And thus they passen thurghout the citee,
And to the listes come they by time.
It nas not of the day yet fully prime,
Whan set was Theseus ful riche and hye,

Ipolita the quene and Emelye,
And othere ladies in degrees aboute.
Unto the setes presseth al the route;
And westward, thurgh the gates under Marte,
Arcite, and eek the hundred of his parte,
With baner reed is entred right anon;
And in that selve moment Palamon
Is under Venus, estward in the place,
With baner whyt, and hardy chere and face.
In al the world, to seken up and doun,
So evene withouten variacioun,
Ther nere swiche compaignyes tweye.
For ther nas noon so wys that coude seye,
That any hadde of other avauntage
Of worthinesse, ne of estaat, ne age,
So even were they chosen, for to gesse;
And in two renges faire they hem dresse.
  Whan that hir names rad were everichoon,
That in hir nombre gile were ther noon,
Tho were the gates shet, and cryed was loude:
'Do now your devoir, yonge knightes proude!'
  The heraudes lefte hir priking up and doun;
Now ringen trompes loude and clarioun;
Ther is namore to seyn, but west and est
In goon the speres ful sadly in arest;

In goth the sharpe spore into the side.
Ther seen men who can juste and who can ride;
Ther shiveren shaftes upon sheeldes thikke;
He feleth thurgh the herte-spoon the prikke.
Up springen speres twenty foot on highte;
Out goon the swerdes as the silver brighte;
The helmes they to-hewen and to-shrede,
Out brest the blood with sterne stremes rede;
With mighty maces the bones they to-breste.
He thurgh the thikkeste of the throng gan threste;
Ther stomblen stedes stronge and doun goth al;
He° rolleth under foot as doth a bal;
He° foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun;
And he° him hurtleth with his hors adoun.
He thurgh the body is hurt, and sithen y-take,
Maugree his heed, and brought unto the stake;
As forward was, right ther he moste abide;
Another lad is on that other side.
And som time doth hem° Theseus to reste,
Hem° to refreshe, and drinken if hem leste
Ful ofte a-day han thise Thebanes two
Togidre y-met, and wrought his felawe wo°;
Unhorsed hath ech other of hem tweye.
Ther nas no tigre in the vale of Galgopheye,
Whan that hir whelp is stole whan it is lite,

So cruel on the hunte° as is Arcite
For jalous herte upon this Palamoun;
Ne in Belmarie there nis so fel leoun,°
That hunted is or for his hunger wood,
Ne of his prey desireth so the blood,
As Palamon to sleen his foo Arcite.
The jalous strokes on hir helmes bite;
Out renneth blood on both hir sides rede.
Som time an ende ther is of every dede;
For er the sonne unto the reste wente,
The stronge king Emetreus gan hente
This Palamon, as he faught with Arcite,
And made his swerd depe in his flesh to bite;
And by the force of twenty is he take°
Unyolden, and y-drawe unto the stake.
And in the rescous of this Palamoun
The stronge king Ligurge is born adoun;
And king Emetreus, for al his strengthe,
Is born out of his sadel a swerdes lengthe,
So hitte him Palamon er he were take°;
But al for nought, he was brought to the stake.
His hardy herte mighte him helpe naught;
He moste abide, whan that he was caught,
By force and eek by composicioun.°
Who sorweth now but woful Palamoun,

That moot namore goon agayn to fighte?
And whan that Theseus hadde seyn this sighte,
Unto the folk that foughten thus echon
He cride, 'Ho! namore, for it is don!
I wol be trewe juge and no partye:
Arcite of Thebes shal have Emelye,
That by his fortune hath hir faire y-wonne.'
Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne
For joye of this, so loude and heighe withalle,
It semed that the listes sholde falle.
What can now faire Venus doon above?
What seith she now? what doth this quene of love
But wepeth so, for wanting of hir wille,
Til that hir teres in the listes fille?
She seyde, 'I am ashamed doutelees.'
Saturnus seyde, 'Doughter, hold thy pees.
Mars hath his wille, his knight hath al his bone,
And, by myn heed, thou shalt ben esed sone.'
The trompes with the loude minstralcye,
The heraudes that ful loude yolle and crye,
Been in hir wele° for joye of daun Arcite.
But herkneth me, and stinteth now a lite,
Which a miracle ther bifel anon.
This fierse Arcite hath of his helm y-don,°
And on a courser for to shewe his face

He priketh endelong the large place,°
Loking upward upon this Emelye;
And she agayn him caste a frendlich ye
(For wommen, as to speken in comune,
They folwen al the favour of fortune),
And was al his chere, as in his herte.°
Out of the ground a furie infernal sterte,
From Pluto sent at requeste of Saturne,
For which his hors for fere gan to turne,
And leep aside and foundred as he leep;
And er that Arcite may taken keep,
He pighte him on the pomel of his heed,
That in the place he lay as he were deed,
His brest to-brosten with his sadel-bowe.
As blak he lay as any cole or crowe,
So was the blood y-ronnen in his face.
Anon he was y-born out of the place
With herte soor to Theseus paleys.
Tho was he corven° out of his harneys,
And in a bed y-brought ful faire and blive;
For he was yet in memorie° and alive,
And alway crying after Emelye.
Duk Theseus with al his compaignye
Is comen hoom to Atthenes his citee,
With alle blisse and greet solempnitee.

Al be it that this aventure was falle,
He nolde nought disconforten hem alle.
Men seyde eek that Arcite shal nat dye,
He shal ben heled of his maladye.
And of another thing they were as fayn,
That of hem alle was ther noon y-slayn,
Al were they sore y-hurt, and namely oon,
That with a spere was thirled his brest-boon.°
To othere° woundes and to broken armes,
Some hadden salves and some hadden charmes;
Fermacies of herbes, and eek save°
They dronken, for they wolde hir limes have.
For which this noble duk, as he wel can,
Conforteth and honoureth every man,
And made revel al the longe night,
Unto the straunge lordes, as was right.
Ne ther was holden no disconfitinge,°
But as a justes or a tourneyinge;
For soothly ther was no disconfiture;
For falling nis nat but an aventure;
Ne to be lad by force unto the stake
Unyolden, and with twenty knightes take,
O persone allone withouten mo,
And haried forth by arme, foot, and too,
And eek his stede driven forth with staves.

With foot-men, bothe yemen and eek knaves. —
It nas aretted him no vileinye,
Ther may no man clepen it cowardye.
For which anon duk Theseus leet crye,°
To stinten alle rancour and envye,
The gree as wel of o side as of other,
And either side y-lyk as otheres brother;
And yaf hem yiftes after hir degree,
And fully heeld a feste dayes three;
And conveyed the kinges worthily
Out of his toun a journee largely.
And hoom wente every man the righte way;
Ther was namore but 'Farewel!' 'Have good day!'
Of this bataille I wol namore endite,
But speke of Palamoun and of Arcite.
Swelleth the brest of Arcite, and the sore
Encreseth at his herte more and more.
The clothered blood, for any lechecraft,
Corrupteth, and is in his bouk y-laft,
That neither veyne-blood ne ventusinge
Ne drinke of herbes may ben his helpinge.
The vertu expulsyf,° or animal,
Fro thilke vertu cleped natural,
Ne may the venim voyden ne expelle.
The pipes of his longes gonne to swelle,

And every lacerte in his brest adoun
Is shent with venim and corrupcioun.
Him gayneth neither, for to gete his lyf,
Vomyt upward ne dounward laxatyf;
Al is to-brosten thilke regioun,
Nature hath now no dominacioun.
And certeynly, ther nature wol nat wirche,
Farewel, phisyk! go ber the man to chirche!°
This al and som,° that Arcita moot dye;
For which° he sendeth after Emelye,
And Palamon, that was his cosin dere;
Than seyde he thus as ye shul after here.°
'Naught may the woful spirit in myn herte
Declare o poynt of alle my sorwes smerte
To yow, my lady, that I love most;
But I biquethe the service of my gost
To yow aboven every creature,
Sin that my lyf may no lenger dure.
Allas, the wo! allas, the peynes stronge
That I for yow have suffred, and so longe!
Allas, the deeth! allas, myn Emelye!
Allas, departing° of our compaignye!
Allas myn hertes quene! allas, my wyf!
Myn hertes lady, endere of my lyf!
What is this world? what asketh men to have?

Now with his love, now in his colde grave
Allone, withouten any compaignye.°
Farewel, my swete fo! myn Emelye!
And softe tak me in your armes tweye,
For love of God, and herkneth what I seye.
'I have heer with my cosin Palamon
Had stryf and rancour many a day a-gon,
For love of yow and for my jalousye;
And Jupiter so wis my soule gye
(To speken of a servant proprely,
With alle circumstaunces trewely;
That is to seyne, trouthe, honour, knighthede,
Wisdom, humblesse, estaat, and heigh kinrede,
Fredom, and al that longeth to that art°),
So Jupiter have of my soule part,°
As in this world, right now ne knowe I non
So worthy to be loved as Palamon,
That serveth yow and wol doon al his lyf.
And if that evere ye shul been a wyf,°
Foryet nat Palamon, the gentil man.'
And with that word his speche faille gan;
For fro his feet up to his brest was come
The cold of deeth that hadde him overcome,
And yet moreover, for in his armes two
The vital strengthe is lost and al ago.

I

Only the intellect withouten more,
That dwelled in his herte sik and sore,
Gan faillen when the herte felte deeth.
Dusked his eyen two and failled breeth,
But on his lady yet caste he his ye;
His laste word was, 'Mercy, Emelye!'
His spirit chaunged hous and wente ther°
As I cam never; I can nat tellen wher.
Therfor I stinte, I nam no divinistre;
Of soules finde I nat in this registre,
Ne me ne list thilke opiniouns to telle
Of hem, though that they writen wher they dwelle.
Arcite is cold; ther Mars his soule gye.
Now wol I speken forth of Emelye.
Shrighte Emelye, and howleth Palamon,
And Theseus his suster took anon
Swowninge, and bar hir fro the corps away.
What helpeth it to tarien forth the day,
To tellen how she weep, both eve and morwe?
For in swich cas wommen have swich sorwe,
Whan that hir housbondes been from hem ago,
That for the more part they sorwen so,
Or elles fallen in swich maladye
That at the laste certeynly they dye.
Infinite been the sorwes and the teres

Of olde folk, and folk of tendre yeres,
In al the toun for deeth of this Theban.
For him ther wepeth bothe child and man;
So greet a weping was ther noon certayn,
Whan Ector was y-brought, al fresh y-slayn,
To Troye. Allas! the pitee that was ther,
Cracching of chekes, rending eek of heer.
'Why woldestow be deed,' thise wommen crye,
'And haddest gold ynough and Emelye!'
No man mighte gladen Theseus,
Savinge his olde fader Egeus,
That knew this worldes transmutacioun,
As he hadde seyn it up and doun,
Joye after wo, and wo after gladnesse;
And shewed hem ensamples and lyknesse.
'Right as ther deyed nevere man,' quod he,
That he ne lived in erthe in som degree,
Right so ther lived nevere man,' he seyde,
In al this world, that som time he ne deyde.
This world nis but a thurghfare ful of wo,
And we ben pilgrimes passing to and fro;
Deeth is an ende of every worldly sore.'
And over al this yet seyde he muchel more
To this effect, ful wysly to enhorte
The peple that they sholde hem reconforte.

Duk Theseus with al his bisy cure
Cast now wher that the sepulture
Of good Arcite may best y-maked be,
And eek most honurable in his degree.
And at the laste he took conclusioun
That ther as first Arcite and Palamoun
Hadden for love the bataille hem bitwene,
That in that selve grove, swote and grene,
Ther as he hadde his amorouse desires,
His compleynte, and for love his hote fires,
He wolde make a fyr in which the office
Funeral he mighte all accomplice;
And leet comaunde anon to hakke and hewe
The okes olde, and leye hem on a rewe
In colpons wel arrayed for to brenne.
His officers with swifte feet they renne,
And ride anon at his comaundement.
And after this, Theseus hath y-sent
After a bere, and it al overspradde
With cloth of gold, the richest that he hadde;
And of the same suyte he cladde Arcite.
Upon his hondes hise gloves° white,
Eek on his heed a coroune of laurer grene,
And in his hond a swerd ful bright and kene,
He leyde him, bare the visage, on the bere.

Therwith he weep that pitee was to here;
And for the peple sholde seen him alle,
Whan it was day, he broughte him to the halle,
That roreth of the crying and the soun.
Tho cam this woful Theban Palamoun,
With flotery berd and ruggy ashy heres,
In clothes blake, y-dropped al with teres;
And, passing° othere of weping, Emelye,
The rewfulleste of al the compaignye.
In as muche as the service sholde be
The more noble and riche in his degree,°
Duk Theseus leet forth three stedes bringe,
That trapped were in steel al gliteringe,
And covered with the armes of daun Arcite.
Up on thise stedes grete and white,
Ther seten folk, of which oon bar his sheeld,
Another his spere up in his hondes heeld,
The thridde bar with him his bowe Turkeys,
Of brend gold was the cas, and eek the harneys;
And riden forth a pas with sorweful chere
Toward the grove, as ye shul after here.
The nobleste of the Grekes that ther were
Upon hir shuldres carieden the bere,
With slake pas, and eyen rede and wete,
Thurghout the citee, by the maister-strete,

That sprad was al with blak, and wonder hye
Right of the same is the strete y-wrye.
Upon the right hond wente old Egeus,
And on that other side duk Theseus,
With vessels in hir hand of gold wel fyn,
Al ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wyn;
Eek Palamon, with ful greet compaignye;
And after that cam woful Emelye,
With fyr in honde, as was that time the gise,
To do the office of funeral servise.
Heigh labour and ful greet apparaillinge
Was at the service and the fyr-makinge,
That with his grene top the heven raughte,
And twenty fadme of brede the armes straughte;
This is to seyn, the bowes were so brode.
Of stree first ther was leyd ful many a lode;
But how the fyr was maked up on highte;
And eek the names how the trees highte,
As ook, firre, birch, asp, alder, holm, popler,
Wilow, elm, plane, ash, box, chasteyn, lind, laurer,
Mapul, thorn, beech, hasel, ew, whippeltre;
How they weren feld, — shal nat be told for me;
Ne how the goddes ronnen up and doun,
Disherited of hir habitacioun,
In which they woneden in reste and pees,

Nymphes, Faunes, and Amadrides;
Ne how the bestes and the briddes alle
Fledden for fere, whan the wode was falle;
Ne how the ground agast was of the light,
That was nat wont to seen the sonne bright;
Ne how the fyr was couched first with stree,
And than with drye stokkes cloven a three,
And than with grene wode and spicerye,
And than with cloth of gold and with perrye,
And gerlandes hanging with ful many a flour,
The mirre, thencens, with al so greet odour;
Ne how Arcite lay among al this,
Ne what richesse aboute his body is;
Ne how that Emelye, as was the gise,
Putte in the fyr of funeral servise;
Ne how she swowned whan maad was the fyr,
Ne what she spak, ne what was hir desyr;
Ne what jeweles men in the fyr caste,
Whan that the fyr was greet and brente faste;
Ne how somme caste hir sheeld, and somme hir spere,
And of hir vestiments whiche that they were,
And cuppes ful of wyn, and milk, and blood,
Into the fyr, that brente as it were wood;
Ne how the Grekes with an huge route
Thryes riden al the fyr aboute

Upon the left hand with a loud shoutinge,
And thryes with hir speres clateringe;
And thryes how the ladies gonne crye;
Ne how that lad was homward Emelye;
Ne how Arcite is brent to ashen colde;
Ne how that liche-wake was y-holde
Al thilke night; ne how the Grekes pleye
The wake-pleyes; ne kepe I nat to seye
Who wrastleth best naked with oille enoynt,
Ne who that bar him best, in no disjoynt.°
I wol nat tellen eek how that they goon
Hoom til Atthenes whan the pley is doon.
But shortly to the poynt than wol I wende,
And maken of my longe tale an ende.

By processe and by lengthe of certeyn yeres
Al stinted is the mourning and the teres.
Of Grekes by oon general assent,
Than seemed me ther was a parlement
At Atthenes, upon certeyn poynts and cas;
Among the whiche poynts y-spoken was
To have with certeyn contrees alliaunce,
And have fully of Thebans obeisaunce.
For which this noble Theseus anon
Leet senden after gentil Palamon,
Unwist° of him what was the cause and why;

But in his blake clothes sorwefully
He cam at his comaundement in hye.
Tho sente Theseus for Emelye.
Whan they were set, and hust was al the place,
And Theseus abiden hadde a space
Er any word cam from his wise brest,
His eyen sette° he ther as was his lest,
And with a sad visage he siked stille,
And after that right thus he seyde his wille.
'The Firste Moevere of the cause above,°
Whan he first made the faire cheyne of love,
Greet was theffect, and heigh was his entente.
Wel wiste he why and what therof he mente;
For with that faire cheyne of love he bond
The fyr, the eyr, the water, and the lond
In certeyn boundes that they may nat flee.
That same Prince and that Moevere,' quod he,
'Hath stablissed in this wrecched world adoun
Certeyne dayes and duracioun
To all that is engendred in this place,
Over the whiche day they may nat pace,
Al mowe they yet tho dayes wel abregge;
Ther needeth non auctoritee to allegge,
For it is preved by experience,
But that me list declaren my sentence.°

Than may men by this ordre wel discerne
That thilke Moevere stable is an eterne.
Wel may men knowe, but it be a fool,
That every part deriveth from his hool;°
For nature hath nat take his biginning
Of no partye ne cantel of a thing,
But of a thing that parfit is and stable,
Descending so til it be corrumpable.
And therfore of his wise purveyaunce,
He hath so wel biset his ordinaunce,
That speces of thinges and progressiouns
Shullen endure by successiouns,
And nat eterne, with-outen any lye;°
This maistow understonde and seen at ye.
'Lo the ook, that hath so long a norishinge
Fro time that it first biginneth springe,
And had so long a lyf, as we may see,
Yet at the laste wasted is the tree.
'Considereth eek, how that the harde stoon
Under our feet, on which we trede and goon,
Yit wasteth it, as it lith by the weye.
The brode river sometime wexeth dreye.
The grete tounes see we wane and wende.
Than may ye see that al this thing hath ende.
'Of man and womman seen we wel also

That nedeth,° in oon of thise termes two,
This is to seyn, in youthe or elles age,
He moot ben deed, the king as shal a page;
Som in his bed, som in the depe see,
Som in the large feeld, as men may se.
Ther helpeth nought, al goth that ilke weye.
Than may I seyn that al this thing moot deye.
'What maketh this but Jupiter the king,
The which is prince° and cause of alle thing,
Converting al unto his propre welle
From which it is derived, sooth to telle?
And here-agayns no creature on live
Of no degree availleth for to strive.
'Thanne is it wisdom, as it thinketh me,
To maken vertu of necessitee,
And take it wel that we may nat eschue,
And namely that to us alle is due.
And whoso gruccheth ought, he doth folye,
And rebel is to him that al may gye.
And certeynly a man hath most honour
To dyen in his excellence and flour,
Whan he is siker of his gode name;
Than hath he doon his freend, ne him, no shame.
And gladder oughte his freend ben of his deeth,
Whan with honour up-yolden is his breeth,

Than whan his name appalled is for age;
For al forgeten is his vasselage.
Than is it best, as for a worthy fame,
To dyen whan that he is best of name.
'The contrarie of al this is wilfulnesse.
Why grucchen we, why have we hevinesse,
That good Arcite, of chivalrye flour,
Departed is, with deutee and honour
Out of this foule prison of this lyf?
Why grucchen heer his cosin and his wyf
Of his welfare that loved hem so wel?
Can he hem thank[c] (nay, God woot, never a del)
That bothe his soule and eek hemself offende,
And yet they mowe hir lustes nat amende?
'What may I conclude of this longe serie,
But after wo I rede us to be merie,
And thanken Jupiter of al his grace?
And er that we departen from this place,
I rede that we make, of sorwes two,
O parfit joye, lastinge everemo.
And loketh now, wher most sorwe is her-inne,
Ther wol we first amenden and biginne.
'Suster,' quod he, 'this is my fulle assent,
With al thavys here of my parlement,
That gentil Palamon, your owene knight,

That serveth yow with wille, herte, and myght,
And ever hath doon, sin that ye first him knewe,
That ye shul, of youre grace, upon him rewe,
And taken him for housbonde and for lord;
Leen me youre hond, for this is our accord.
Lat see now of your wommanly pitee.
He is a kinges brother° sone, pardee;
And, though he were a povre bacheler,
Sin he hath served yow so many a yeer,
And had for yow so greet adversitee,
It moste been considered, leveth me;
For gentil mercy oughte to passen right.'°
Than seyde he thus to Palamon ful right:
'I trowe ther nedeth litel sermoning
To make yow assente to this thing.
Com neer, and tak your lady by the hond.'
Betwixen hem was maad anon the bond,
That highte matrimoigne, or mariage,
By al the counseil and the baronage.
And thus with alle blisse and melodye
Hath Palamon y-wedded Emelye.
And God, that al this wide world hath wrought,
Sende him his love that hath it dere a-bought.
For now is Palamon in alle wele,
Living in blisse, in richesse and in hele;

And Emelye him loveth so tendrely,
And he hir serveth al-so gentilly,
That nevere was ther no word hem bitwene
Of jalousye, or any other tene.
Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye;
And God save al this faire compaignye!

THE NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE

This is the Prologe of the Nonnes Preestes Tale

'Ho!' quod the Knight, 'Good Sire, namore of this![a]
That ye han seyd is right ynough y-wis,
And muchel more; for litel hevinesse
Is right ynough to muche folk, I gesse.
I seye for me it is a greet disese,
Where as men han been in greet welthe and ese,
To heren of hire sodeyn fal, allas!
And the contrarie is joye and greet solas,
As whan a man hath ben in povre estaat,
And climbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,
And there abideth in prosperitee.
Swich thing is gladsom, as it thinketh me,
And of swich thing were goodly for to telle.'
'Ye,' quod our Hoost, 'by Seint Poules belle,
Ye seye right sooth! This Monk he clappeth lowde;
He spak how[o] "Fortune covered with a clowde"—
I noot nevere what, and also of a "Tragedie"
Right now ye herde. And, pardee, no remedie

It is for to bewaille, ne compleyne
That that is doon; and als it is a peyne,
As ye han seyd, to here of hevinesse.
Sire Monk! Namore of this, so God yow blesse!
Youre tale anoyeth al this compaignye.
Swich talking is not worth a boterflye,
For ther inne is ther no desport ne game.
Wherfore, Sir Monk, Daun Piers by your name,
I pray you hertely telle us somewhat elles.
For sikerly, nere clinking of youre belles
That on youre bridel hange on every side,
By hevene° king, that for us alle dide,
I sholde er this han fallen doun for slepe,
Although the slough had never been so depe,
Thanne hadde your tale al be told in veyn;
For certeinly as that thise clerkes seyn,
Where as a man may have noon audience,
Nought helpeth it to tellen his sentence.
And wel I woot the substance is in me,
If any thing shal wel reported be.
Sir, sey somwhat of hunting,° I yow preye.'
'Nay,' quod this Monk, 'I have no lust to pleye.
Now let another telle, as I have told.'
Thanne spak oure hoost with rude speche and bold,
And seyde unto the Nonnes Preest anon:

'Com neer, thou preest, com hider, thou "Sir John!"
Telle us swich thing as may oure hertes glade.
Be blithe, though thou ride upon a jade.
What though thyn horse be bothe foul and lene?
If he wol serve thee, rekke nat a bene;
Loke that thyn herte be murie everemo.'
'Yis, sir,' quod he, 'yis, Hoost, so moot I go,°
But I be murie, y-wis I wol be blamed.'
And right anon his tale he hath attamed,
And thus he seyde unto us everichon,
This swete preest, this goodly man, Sir John.

THE NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE

Here biginneth the Nonnes Preestes Tale of the Cok and Hen, Chauntecleer and Pertelote

A POVRE widwe somdel stape in age,
Was whilom dwelling in a narwe cotage
Biside a grove stondinge in a dale.
This widwe, of which I telle yow my tale,
Sin thilke day that she was last a wyf,
In pacience ladde a ful simple lyf;
For litel was hir catel and hir rente.
By housbondrye of swich as God hire sente,
She fond hirself, and eek hire doughtren two.
Three large sowes hadde she, and namo,
Three kyn and eek a sheep that highte Malle.
Ful soty was hir bour and eek hir halle,°
In which she eet ful many a sclendre meel;
Of poynaunt sauce hir neded never a deel.
No deyntee morsel passed thurgh hir throte;
Hir diete was accordant to hir cote.
Repleccioun ne made hir nevere syk;

Attempre diete was al hir phisyk,
And exercise, and hertes suffisaunce.
The goute lette hir nothing for to daunce,°
Napoplexye shente nat hir heed;
No wyn ne drank she, neither whyt ne reed.
Hir bord was served moost with whyt and blak,
Milk and broun breed, in which she fond no lak,
Seynd bacoun and somtime an ey or tweye;
For she was as it were a maner deye.
A yerd she hadde, enclosed al aboute
With stikkes and a drye dich withoute,
In which she hadde a cok, hight Chauntecleer.
In al the land of crowing nas his peer.
His voys was murier than the murie orgon
On messe-dayes that in the chirche gon;
Wel sikerer was his crowing in his logge,
Than is a clokke, or an abbey orlogge.
By nature he knew ech ascencioun°
Of equinoxial in thilke toun;
For whan degrees fiftene weren ascended,
Thanne crew he that it mighte nat ben amended.
His comb was redder than the fyn coral
And batailled as it were a castel wal;
His bile was blak, and as the jeet it shoon;
Lyk asure were hise legges and his toon;

His nayles whiter than the lilie flour,
And lyk the burned gold was his colour.
This gentil cok hadde in his governaunce
Sevene hennes for to doon al his plesaunce,
Whiche were hise sustres and his paramours,
And wonder lyk to him, as of colours;
Of whiche the faireste hewed on hir throte
Was cleped faire damoysele Pertelote.
Curteys she was, discreet and debonaire,
And compaignable, and bar hirself so faire,
Sin thilke day that she was seven night old,
That trewely she hath the herte in hold
Of Chauntecleer loken in every lith;
He loved hir so, that wel was him therwith.
But swich a joye was it to here hem singe,
Whan that the brighte sonne bigan to springe,
In swete accord, 'My lief is faren in londe;'
For thilke time, as I have understonde,
Bestes and briddes coude speke and singe.
And so bifel that in a daweninge,
As Chauntecleer among hise wives alle
Sat on his perche that was in the halle,
And next him sat this faire Pertelote,
This Chauntecleer gan gronen in his throte,
As man that in his dreem is drecched sore.

And whan that Pertelote thus herde him rore,
She was agast, and seyde, 'O herte dere,
What eyleth yow, to grone in this manere?
Ye been a verray sleper; fy, for shame°!'
And he answerde and seyde thus, 'Madame,
I pray yow that ye take it nat agrief;
By God, me mette I was in swich meschief
Right now, that yet myn herte is sore afright.
Now God,' quod he, 'my swevene recche aright,
And kepe my body out of foul prisoun!
Me mette how that I romed up and doun
Withinne our yerd, wher as I saugh a beest
Was° lyk an hound, and wolde han maad areest
Upon my body, and wolde han had me deed.
His colour was bitwixe yelow and reed;
And tipped was his tayl and bothe his eres
With blak, unlyk the remenant of his heres;
His snowte smal, with glowing eyen tweye.
Yet of his look for fere almost I deye;
This caused me my groning doutelees.'
'Avoy!' quod she, 'fy on yow, hertelees!
Allas!' quod she, 'for, by that God above,
Now han ye lost myn herte and al my love;
I can nat love a coward, by my feith!
For certes, what so any womman seith,

We alle desiren, if it mighte be,
To han housbondes hardy, wise, and free,
And secree, and no nigard, ne no fool,
Ne him that is agast of every tool,
Ne noon avauntour. By that God above!
How dorste ye seyn for shame unto your love
That any thing mighte make yow aferd?
Have ye no mannes herte, and han a berd?
Allas! and conne ye been agast of swevenis?
Nothing, God wot, but vanitee, in sweven is.
Swevenes engendren of replecioums,
And ofte of fume and of complecciouns,
Whan humours been to habundant in a wight.
Certes this dreem, which ye han met tonight,
Cometh of the grete superfluitee
Of youre rede *colera*,° pardee,
Which causeth folk to dreden in hir dremes
Of arwes, and of fire with rede lemes,
Of grete bestes that they wol hem bite,
Of contek and of whelpes, grete and lite;
Right as the humour of malencolye
Causeth ful many a man in sleep to crye,
For fere of blake beres, or boles blake,°
Or elles blake develes wole him take.
Of othere humours° coude I telle also

That werken many a man in sleep ful wo;
But I wol passe as lightly as I can.
Lo Catoun,° whïch that was so wys a man,
Seyde he nat thus, "Ne do no fors of dremes"?°
'Now, sire,' quod she, 'whan we flee fro the bemes,
For Goddes love, as tak° som laxatyf;
Up peril of my soule and of my lyf,
I counseille yow the beste, I wol nat lye,
That bothe of colere and of malencolye
Ye purge yow; and for ye shal nat tarie,
Though in this toun is noon apothecarie,
I shal myself to herbes techen yow
That shul ben for your hele and for your prow;
And in oure yerd tho herbes shal I finde
The whiche han of hir propretee by kinde
To purgen yow binethe, and eek above.
Forget not this, for Goddes owene love!
Ye been ful colerik of compleccioun;°
Ware the sonne in his ascencioun
Ne finde yow nat repleet of humours hote.
And if it do, I dar wel leye a grote,
That ye shul have a fevere terciane,
Or an agu, that may be youre bane.
A day or two ye shul have digestives
Of wormes, er ye take youre laxatives

Of lauriol, centaure, and fumetere,
Or elles of ellebor that groweth there,
Of catapuce or of gaytres beryis,
Of erbe ive growing in our yerd ther mery° is;
Pekke hem up right as they growe and ete hem in.
Be mirie, housbonde, for youre fader kin!
Dredeth no dreem; I can say yow namore.'
'Madame,' quod he, '*graunt mercy*° of youre lore.
But natheles, as touching daun Catoun,
That hath of wisdom swich a greet renoun,
Though that he bad no dremes for to drede,
By God, men may in olde bokes rede
Of many a man, more of auctoritee
Than ever Catoun was, so moot I thee,
That al the revers seyn of this sentence,
And han well founden by experience
That dremes ben significaciouns
As wel of joye as of tribulaciouns
That folk enduren in this lyf present.
Ther nedeth make of this noon argument;°
The verray preve sheweth it in dede.
'Oon of the gretteste auctour° that men rede
Seith thus, that whilom two felawes wente
On pilgrimage, in a ful good entente;
And happed° so they comen in a toun,

Wher as ther was swich congregacioun
Of peple, and eek so streit° of herbergage,
That they ne founde as muche as o cotage
In which they bothe mighte y-logged be.
Wherfore they mosten of necessitee,
As for that night, departen compaignye;
And ech of hem goth to his hostelrye,
And took his logging as it wolde falle.°
That oon of hem was logged in a stalle,
Fer in a yerd, with oxen of the plough;
That other man was logged well ynough,
As was his aventure or his fortune,
That us governeth alle as in commune.°
'And so bifel that long er it were° day,
This man mette in his bed, ther as he lay,
How that his felawe gan upon him calle,
And seyde, "Allas! for in an oxes stalle
This night I shal be mordred ther I lye.
Now help me, dere brother, or I dye;
In alle haste com to me!" he sayde.
This man out of his sleep for fere abrayde;
But whan that he was wakened of his sleep,
He turned him and took of this no keep;
Him thoughte his dreem nas but a vanitee.
Thus twyes in his sleping dremed he.

And atte thridde time yet his felawe
Cam, as him thoughte, and seyde, "I am now slawe!
Bihold my blody woundes, depe and wide!
Arys up erly in the morwe-tide,
And at the west gate of the toun," quod he,
"A carte ful of donge ther shaltow see,
In which my body is hid ful prively;
Do° thilke carte arresten boldely.
My gold caused my mordre, sooth to sayn;"
And tolde him every poynt how he was slayn,
With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe.
And truste wel, his dreem he fond ful trewe;
For on the morwe, as sone as it was day,
To his felawes in he took the way;
And whan that he cam to this oxes stalle,
After his felawe he bigan to calle.

'The hostiler answerede him anon
And seyde, "Sire, your felawe is agon;
As sone as day he wente out of the toun."

'This man gan fallen in suspecioun,°
Remembring on his dremes that he mette,
And forth he goth, no lenger wolde he lette,
Unto the west gate of the toun, and fond
A dong-carte, as it were to donge lond,
That was arrayed in that same wise

As ye han herd the dede man devise.
And with an hardy herte he gan to crye
Vengeaunce and justice of this felonye: —
"My felawe mordred is this same night,
And in this carte hē lith gaping upright.
I crye out on the ministres," quod he,
"That sholden kepe and reulen this citee;
Harrow! allas! here lith my felawe slayn!"
What sholde I more unto this tale sayn?
The peple out-sterte and caste the cart to grounde,
And in the middel of the dong they founde
The dede man that mordred was al newe.
'O blisful God, that art so just and trewe!
Lo, how that thou biwreyest mordre alway!
Mordre wol out, that se we day by day.
Mordre is so wlatsom and abhominable
To God, that is so just and resonable,
That he ne wol nat suffre it heled be;
Though it abide a yeer, or two, or three.
Mordre wol out, this my conclusioun.
And right anoon, ministres of that toun
Han hent the carter, and so sore him pined,
And eek the hostiler so sore engined,
That thay biknewe hir wikkednesse anoon,
And were anhanged by the nekke-boon.

'Here may men seen that dremes been to drede.
And certes in the same book I rede,
Right in the nexte chapitre after this,
(I gabbe nat, so have I joy or blis)
Two men that wolde han passed over see
For certeyn cause into a fer contree,
If that the wind ne hadde been contrarie,
That made hem in a citee for to tarie
That stood ful mery upon an haven-side.
But on a day agayn the eventide
The wind gan chaunge, and blew right as hem leste.
Jolif and glad they went unto hir reste,
And casten hem ful erly for to saille.

'But herkneth! to that oo man fel a greet mervaille
That oon of hem, in sleping as he lay,
Him mette° a wonder dreem agayn the day°;
Him thoughte a man stood by his beddes side,
And him comaunded that he sholde abide,
And seyde him thus, "If thou tomorwe wende,
Thou shalt be dreynt; my tale is at an ende."
He wook, and tolde his felawe what he mette,
And preyde him his viage for to lette;
As for that day, he preyde him to bide.
His felawe, that lay by his beddes side,
Gan for to laughe, and scorned him ful faste.

"No dreem," quod he, "may so myn herte agaste,
That I wol lette for to do my thinges.
I sette not a straw by thy dreminges,
For swevenes been but vanitees and japes.
Men dreme al day of owles or of apes
And of many a maze therwithal;
Men dreme of thing that nevere was ne shal.
But sith I see that thou wolt here abide,
And thus forslewthen wilfully thy tide,
God wot it reweth me; and have good day!"
And thus he took his leve and wente his way.
But er that he hadde halfe his cours y-seyled,
Noot I nat why ne what mischaunce it eyled,
But casuelly the shippes botme rente,
And ship and man under the water wente
In sighte of othere shippes it beside,
That with hem seyled at the same tide.°
'And therfor, faire Pertelote so dere,
By swiche ensamples olde maistow lere,
That no man sholde been to recchelees
Of dremes; for I seye thee doutelees,
That many a dreem ful sore is for to drede.
'Lo, in the lyf of seynt Kenelm, I rede,
That was Kenulphus sone, the noble king
Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thing

A lite er he was mordred, on a day
His mordre in his avisioun he say.
His norice him expouned every deel
His swevene, and bad him for to kepe him weel
For traisoun°; but he nas but seven yeer old.
And therfore litel tale hath he told
Of any dreem, so holy was his herte.
By God, I hadde levere than my sherte
That ye hadde rad his legende, as have I
Dame Pertelote, I say yow trewely,
Macrobeus, that writ the avisioun
In Affrike of the worthy Cipioun,
Affermeth dremes, and seith that they been
Warninge of thinges that men after seen.
And forthermore, I pray yow loketh wel
In the Olde Testament, of Daniel,
If he held dremes any vanitee.
Reed eek of Joseph, and ther shul ye see
Wher dremes ben somtime, I sey nat alle,
Warninge of thinges that shul after falle.
Loke of Egipte the king, daun Pharao,
His bakere and his boteler also,
Wher they ne felte noon effect in dremes.
Who so wol seken actes of sondry remes,
May rede of dremes many a wonder thing.

'Lo Cresus, which that was of Lyde king,
Mette he nat that he sat upon a tree,
Which signifyed he sholde anhanged be?
Lo here Andromacha, Ectores wyf,
That day that Ector sholde lese his lyf,
She dremed on the same night biforn,
How that the lyf of Ector sholde be lorn,
If thilke day he wente into bataille.
She warned him, but it mighte nat availle;
He wente for to fighte natheles,
But he was slayn anoon of Achilles.
But thilke tale is al to long to telle,
And eek it is ny day, I may nat dwelle.
Shortly I seye, as for conclusioun,
That I shal han of this avisioun
Adversitee; and I seye forthermore,
That I ne telle of laxatives no store,°
For they ben venimes, I woot it wel;
I hem defye, I love hem never a del.
'Now let us speke of mirthe, and stinte al this.
Madame Pertelote, so have I blis,
Of o thing God hath sent me large grace;
For whan I see the beautee of youre face,
Ye been so scarlet-reed about youre yen,
It maketh al my drede for to dyen;

For, also siker as *In principio,*
Mulier est hominis confusio°;
Madame, the sentence of this Latin is — 435
"Womman is mannes joye and al his blis."
* * * * * * *
I am so ful of joye and of solas 436
That I defye bothe swevene and dreem.
And with that word he fley doun fro the beem,
For it was day, and eek hise hennes alle.
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,
For he hadde founde a corn° lay in the yerd. 436
Royal he was, he was namore aferd;
* * * * * * *
He loketh as it were a grim leoun;
And on his toos he rometh up and doun, 43
Him deyned not to sette his foot to grounde.
He chukketh whan he hath a corn y-founde,
And to him rennen thanne hise wives alle.
Thus royal as a prince is in his halle,
Leve I this Chauntecleer in his pasture; 43
And after wol I telle his aventure.

Whan that the month in which the world bigan,
That highte March, whan God first maked man,°
Was compleet, and passed were also
(Sin March bigan)° thritty dayes and two, 43

fel that Chauntecleer, in al his pride,
s seven wives walkinge by his side,
ste up his eyen to the brighte sonne,
at in the signe of Taurus hadde y-ronne
enty degrees and oon, and somewhat more,
d knew by kinde, and by noon other lore,
at it was prime, and crew with blisful stevene.
ne sonne,' he sayde, 'is clomben up on hevene
irty degrees and oon, and more y-wis.
dame Pertelote, my worldes blis,
rkneth thise blisful briddes how they singe,
d se the freshe floures how they springe;
is myn hert of revel and solas!'
sodeynly him fil a sorweful cas;
'ever the latter ende of joye is wo.'
woot that worldly joye is sone ago;
l if a rethor° coude faire endite,
in a cronicle saufly mighte it write,
for a sovereyn notabilitee.
w every wys man, lat him herkne me;
s storie is al so trewe,° I undertake,
is the book of Launcelot de Lake,
t wommen holde in ful greet reverence.
v wol I torne agayn to my sentence.
colfox ful of sly iniquitee

That in the grove hadde woned yeres three,
By heigh imaginacioun forn-cast,°
The same night thurghout the hegges brast
Into the yerd ther Chauntecleer the faire
Was wont, and eek his wives, to repaire.
And in a bed of wortes stille he lay,
Til it was passed undern of the day,
Waitinge his time on Chauntecleer to falle;
As gladly doon thise homicides alle
That in await liggen to mordre men.
O false mordrour lurkinge in thy den!
O newe Scariot, newe Genilon!
False dissimilour, O Greek Sinon,
That broughtest Troye al outrely to sorwe!
O Chauntecleer, accursed be that morwe,
That thou into that yerd fleigh fro the bemes!
Thou were ful wel y-warned by thy dremes,
That thilke day was perilous to thee.
But what that God forwoot moot nedes be,°
After the opinioun of certeyn clerkis.
Witnesse on him, that any parfit clerk is,
That in scole is greet altercacioun
In this matere, and greet disputisoun,
And hath ben of an hundred thousand men.
But I ne can not bulte it to the bren,°

s can the holy doctour Augustyn,
r Boece, or the bishop Bradwardyn,
hether that Goddes worthy forwiting°
reyneth me nedely for to doon a thing,
edely clepe I simple necessitee),
elles if free choys be graunted me
do that same thing, or do it nought,
ough God forwoot it er that it was wrought;
if his witing streyneth never a deel
t by necessitee condicionel.
vil not han to do of swich matere;
y tale is of a cok, as ye may here,
at took his counseil of his wyf, with sorwe,
walken in the yerd upon that morwe
at he hadde met the dreem that I you tolde.
ommennes counseils been ful ofte colde';
ommannes counseil broughte us first to wo,
d made Adam fro Paradys to go,
er as he was ful mirie and wel at ese.
t for I noot, to whom it might displese,
I counseil of wommen wolde blame,
sse over, for I seyde it in my game.
le auctours, wher they trete of swich matere,
d what thay seyn of wommen ye may here.
ise been the cokkes wordes and nat mine;

I can noon harme of no womman divine.
Faire in the sond, to bathe hire mirily,
Lith Pertelote, and alle hir sustres by,
Agayn the sonne; and Chauntecleer so free
Song murier than the mermayde in the see
(For Phisiologus seith sikerly,
How that they singen wel and merily).
And so bifel that as he caste his ye
Among the wortes, on a boterflye,
He was war of this fox that lay ful lowe.
Nothing ne liste him thanne for to crowe,
But cride anon, 'Cok! Cok!' and up he sterte,
As man that was affrayed in his herte.
For naturelly a beest desireth flee
Fro his contrarie, if he may it see,
Though he never erst hadde seyn it with his ye.
This Chauntecleer, whan he gan him espye,
He wolde han fled, but that the fox anon
Seyde, 'Gentil Sire, allas! wher wol ye gon?
Be ye affrayed of me that am youre freend?
Now, certes, I were worse than a feend,
If I to yow wolde harm or vileinye.
I am nat come your counseil for tespye;
But trewely the cause of my cominge
Was only for to herkne how that ye singe.

r trewely ye have as mirie a stevene
eny aungel hath, that is in hevene.
erwith ye han in musik more felinge
an hadde Boece, or any that can singe.
lord youre fader (God his soule blesse!)
d eek your moder, of hire gentilesse,
n in myn hous y-been to my gret ese;°
d certes, sire, ful fayn wolde I yow plese.
t for men speke of singing, I wol saye,
mote I brouke wel myn eyen tweye,
e yow, I herde nevere man so singe,
dide your fader in the morweninge.
tes, it was of herte,° al that he song;
d for to make his voys the more strong,
wolde so peyne him, that with both his yen
moste winke, so loude he wolde cryen,
l stonden on his tiptoon therwithal,
l strecche forth his nekke, long and smal.
l eek he was of swich discrecioun
t ther nas no man in no regioun
t him in song or wisdom mighte passe.
ave weel rad in "Daun Burnel the Asse,"
ong his vers, how that ther was a cok,
that a preestes sone yaf him a knok
on his leg whyl he was yong and nice,

He made him for to lese his benefice.°
But certeyn, ther nis no comparisoun°
Bitwix the wisdom and discrecioun
Of youre fader, and of his subtiltee.
Now singeth, sire, for seynte charitee;
Lat se conne ye youre fader countrefete.'
This Chauntecleer his winges gan to bete,
As man° that coude his traysoun nat espye,
So was he ravished with his flaterye.
Allas! ye lordes, many a fals flatour
Is in your courtes, and many a losengeour,
That plesen yow wel more, by my feith,
Than he that soothfastnesse unto yow seith
(Redeth Ecclesiaste 'Of Flatterye'),°
Beth war, ye lordes, of hir trecherye.
This Chauntecleer stood hye upon his toos,
Strecching his nekke, and held his eyen cloos,
And gan to crowe loude for the nones.
And daun Russel the fox sterte up at ones,
And by the gargat hente Chauntecleer,
And on his bak toward the wode him beer,
For yet ne was ther no man that him sewed.
O destinee, that mayst nat been eschewed!
Allas, that Chauntecleer fleigh fro the bemes!
Allas, his wyf ne roughte nat of dremes!

d on a Friday fil al this meschaunce!
O Venus, that art goddesse of plesaunce,
n that thy servant was this Chauntecleer,
d in thy service dide al his poweer,
* * * * * * *
ıy woltestow suffre him on thy day to dye?
O Gaufred, dere mayster soverayn,
at, whan thy worthy king Richard was slayn
th shot, compleynedest his deeth so sore!
ıy ne hadde I now thy sentence and thy lore,
e Friday fer to chide, as diden ye?
r on a Friday soothly slayn was he)
an wolde I shewe yow how that I coude pleyne
Chauntecleres drede and for his peyne.
Certes, swich cry ne lamentacioun°
s nevere of ladies maad, whan Ilioun
s wonne, and Pirrus with his streite swerd,
an he hadde hent king Priam by the berd
l slayn him (as saith us *Eneydos*),°
maden alle the hennes in the clos,
an they had seyn of Chauntecleer the sighte.
sovereynly dame Pertelote shrighte
louder than dide Hasdrubales wyf;
an that hir housbonde hadde lost his lyf,
l that the Romayns hadde brent Cartage,

She was so ful of torment and of rage,
That wilfully into the fyr she sterte,
And brende hirselven with a stedfast herte.
O woful hennes, right so criden ye,
As, whan that Nero brende the citee
Of Rome, criden the senatoures wives,
For that hir housbondes losten alle hir lives;
Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem slayn.
Now wol I torne to my tale agayn.
This sely widwe and eek hir doughtres two
Herden thise hennes crye and maken wo,
And out at dores sterten they anoon,
And seyen the fox toward the grove goon,
And bar upon his bak the cok away;
And criden, 'Out!' 'Harrow!' and 'Weylaway!'
'Ha,' 'ha,' 'The fox!' and after him they ran,
And eek with staves many another° man;
Ranne Colle our dogge, and Talbot, and Gerland,
And Malkin, with a distaf in hir hand;
Ran cow and calf; and eek the verray hogges.
So fered for berkinge of the dogges
And shouting of the men and wommen eke,
They ronne so, hem thoughte hir herte breke;
They yelleden as feendes doon in helle.
The dokes criden as men wolde hem quelle;

The gees for fere flowen over the trees;
Out of the hive cam the swarm of bees.
So hidous was the noys, *A! benedicite!*
Certes, he Jakke Straw,° and his meynee,
Ne made nevere shoutes half so shrille,
Whan that they wolden any Fleming° kille,
As thilke day was maad upon the fox.
Of bras they broughten bemes, and of box,
Of horn, of boon, in whiche they blewe and pouped,
And therwithal thay shriked and they houped,
It semed as that hevene sholde falle.
Now, gode men, I pray yow herkneth alle!
Lo, how fortune turneth sodeynly
The hope and pride eek of hir enemy!
This cok, that lay upon the foxes bak,
In al his drede, unto the fox he spak,
And seyde, 'Sire, if that I were as ye,
Yet sholde I seyn, as wys God helpe me,
"Turneth agayn, ye proude cherles alle!
A verray pestilence upon yow falle!
Now am I come unto this wodes side,
Maugree your heed the cok shal heer abide;
I wol him ete in feith, and that anon!"'
The fox answerde, 'In feith, it shal be don.'
And as he spak that word, al sodeynly

This cok brak from his mouth deliverly,
And heighe upon a tree he fleigh anon.
And whan the fox saugh that he was gon,
'Allas!' quod he, 'O Chauntecleer, allas!
I have to yow,' quod he, 'y-doon trespas,
In-as-muche as I maked yow aferd,
Whan I yow hente and broughte out of the yerd.
But, sire, I dide it in no wikke entente;
Com doun, and I shal telle yow what I mente;
I shal seye sooth to yow, God help me so.'
'Nay, thanne,' quod he, 'I shrewe us bothe two,
And first I shrewe myself, bothe blood and bones,
If thou bigile me ofter than ones.
Thou shalt namore thurgh thy flaterye
Do me to singe and winken with myn ye.
For he that winketh whan he sholde see,
Al wilfully, God lat him nevere thee!'
'Nay,' quod the fox, 'but God yive him meschaunce,
That is so undiscreet of governaunce,
That jangleth whan he sholde holde his pees.'
Lo, swich it is for to be recchelees,
And necligent, and truste on flaterye.
But ye that holden this tale a folye,
As of a fox, or of a cok and hen,
Taketh the moralitee, gode men;

For Seynt Paul seith, that al that writen is,
To our doctrine it is y-write y-wis.
Taketh the fruyt and lat the chaf be stille.
Now, gode God, if that it be thy wille,
As seith my lord,° so make us alle gode men,
And bringe us alle to his heighe blisse! Amen.

READING ALOUD

THE rules given below may enable one to read the verses with some approach to the usage of certain Chaucerians, if not to that of Chaucer himself. The reader's idea of the sounds and the verse will affect the reception which attempts to read Chaucer aloud will encounter; but the acceptability of reading depends in a greater degree on quality of voice and appreciation of meaning. Nor will all these avail unless one practises reading to others and for others.

To begin with the first line of the *Prologue*: —

Line 1. *wh* should be pronounced like *wh* in *wheel*, not like *w* in *weal*.

a, when not ending a syllable, more like *a* in *what* than *a* in *cat*; but it is sometimes written for *aa* (*a* in *father*).

n as now; but see *nn* and *ng*.

th as in Modern English.

t always like *t* in *tall*, *bat*, *fact*; never like *t* in *nation*.

a, when ending a syllable, like *a* in *father*; but sometimes shorter.

p as now.

r should always be trilled, and should never suggest the sound, or rather absence of sound, of either *r* in *river*.

i has the sound of *i* in *still*, *pin*, *flint*, when it stands before two consonants.

l as now; but *ll* denotes either a lengthening or doubling of the sound.

e final is like *a* in *Cuba*, or blends with a following vowel, or is silent, just as the verse requires. We might accordingly print it when sounded, and omit it when silent, if tastes and authorities agreed.

w initial as now.

h initial just as at present. It may be sounded in all cases; but after much reading one comes to drop it in some common unaccented words: *I've seen 'im*

s final like *ss* in *hiss*.

sh as at present.

ou (*ow*) like *oo* in *pool*.

e, not ending a syllable, like *e* in *set;* but it is sometimes written for *ee* (*ai* in *pair*).

o, ending a syllable (*so-te*), like the first part prolonged of the diphthong *o* in *so*, *tone*, *lone*.

Line 2. *d* as our *d*.

gh as the Scotch pronounce *ch* in *loch*.

o, when not ending a syllable, like *o* in *cot;* but it is sometimes written for *oo*.

f like *ff* in *off*, never like *v*.

m as now.

ch (*cch*) like *ch* in *church*.

c always like *c* in *codicil*, never our *sh*.

Line 3. *b* as now.

v as now.

ey like *i* in *thine*.

Line 4. *u*, ending a syllable, like the French *u*, which resembles *u* in *use* rather than in *brute*.

g like its representatives in the corresponding modern English words.

Line 5. *z* as now.

ph like *f* in *fill*.

u not ending a syllable, like *u* in *pull*.

ee like the first part of the diphthong *a* in *fate* prolonged.

e, ending a stressed syllable, like the preceding.

Line 6. *i* (*y*), ending a stressed syllable, like *i* in *machine*.

y consonant as now.

ng as in the corresponding modern words.

n indicates a lengthening, or doubling, of the sound.

Line 9. *k* as now.

Line 12. *oo* as *o* in Chaucer's *so-te*.

Line 13. *au* like *ou* in *count*.

Line 19. *ay* like *i* in *mine*.

Line 24. *gn* nearly like *n*.

Consonants are pronounced with the following vowel, if possible.

Every letter is pronounced; thus *l* is sounded in *yolk, palmeres, walk,* and *k* in *knight, knowe.* There are, however, certain groups, like *sh, ng,* which are treated as single signs. Some readers often omit a vowel, particularly *e.* *Benedicite* is pronounced *ben'dic'te.*

Even if one did not know the meaning of a single word, the preceding directions would be sufficient for reading the text aloud, so far as the sounds of the letters are concerned; but there is much more in reading than the mere sequence of the sounds of the letters. A letter on the page is a direction to make some vowel or consonant sound. Let me call the sequence of these sounds that corresponds to the succession of the letters the vowel-consonant series. But one cannot utter this series without giving to each sound in it certain qualities that are rarely indicated by anything on the printed page. We can give to the sound a longer or shorter duration, can say it in a higher or a lower note, can speak it in a louder or softer tone. There exist in constant association with the vowel-consonant series, and with one another, three other series: the long-short series, the high-low series, the loud-soft series. There are, too, pauses which we regard as parts of the speech series and discriminate from those stops and breaks which we ascribe to imperfections in voice or mind. Each o

these series falls into successive groups, determined in part by thought and emotion, in part by other influences, — breathing in and out, for instance. We may speak of a sense-group, a breath-group, a strong-weak group, and so forth. Unlike groups sometimes do and sometimes do not begin or end together. There are, moreover, in the speech series resemblances of part to part. Verse emerges when these resemblances recur with such constancy that they attract notice, and are remembered, recognized, anticipated, and at last planned, calculated, contrived. This constancy is rarely so great that absolute verse results, and rarely so little that it is absolute prose. The expectation of this recurrence, or the desire to secure it, often changes the utterance of a group from what it would otherwise have been. There are great differences in the degrees of change which speech has been made to undergo in order to secure these resemblances and contrasts in sense or in sound. The aim has been to produce a certain form, or to produce an effect on the mind by means of this form. The degree of change which some tolerate or praise, others condemn or reject. Some, indeed, find uniformity of repetition so painful that they instinctively, or purposely, in the composition or construction of verse, abandon, for a moment, one or more of the expected resemblances, with or without replacing them by another set of resemblances.

This text of Chaucer represents little more than th
vowel-consonant series. And yet while so much is lef
unexpressed, of some things there is a superfluity o
indications. Thus a verse is indicated to the eye b
the separate line and the initial capital; and one c
the many functions of the marks of punctuation is t
distinguish a verse from what precedes and follows i
Chaucer indeed knew nothing of punctuation and ha
to write so as to be intelligible without it. This wi
help to see what I mean: Write on a strip of pape
a dozen verses of Chaucer in one continuous lin
without capitals, without punctuation, yes, witho
separating the words, so that the dozen verses wi
appear as one great word; and you will be surprise
at the ease with which one can make out whe
the verses begin and end, and what the sense is
each. A like experiment with any similar vers
of the nineteenth century would often show how litt
correspondence there is between the thought-series a
the language-series. Chaucer's verses rime to the e
as well as to the ear in couplets. Triplets do n
occur.

The rimes are single, either ending in a consonant:

That alle the feeldes gliteren up and doun;
And by his baner born is his penoun

or ending in a vowel:—

Goth in the chambre, roming to and fro,
And to himself compleyninge of his wo; 1072

or the rimes are double, either ending in a consonant: —

And by assaut he wan the citee after,
And rente adoun bothe wall and sparre and rafter; 990

or ending in a vowel, — the obscure *e*, with scarcely an exception: —

Him thoughte a man stood by his beddes side,
And him comaunded that he sholde abide, 4270

Of the long-short series there are no other marks than such as are found in the signs of the vowel-consonant series. Thus, *o* at the end of a syllable is prolonged, as in *so-te;* when not at the end of a syllable it is usually shortened, as in *croppes; oo* stands for the long sound sometimes, as in *hoost.*

There are no indications whatever of the high-low series, except such as may be afforded by the modern punctuation. And yet every story-teller knows that his intention, especially his humour, is rarely appreciated unless some subtle inflection intimates to the hearer that an utterance means more than others would be likely to discern in it. It is like a glance, a gesture, a movement, that reveals a situation or a character in an instant, with no commentary to thank.

Strangest thing of all, there does not appear to be any indication whatever of the loud-soft series; and

this, when we are told that Chaucer was, and that all good poets, in England at least, are, more concerned about the proper alternation and succession of loud and soft syllables than about any other qualities of the sound whatever. Singular oversight that has made necessary numerous volumes to communicate the results of laborious investigations when a few simple marks might have shown us how Chaucer read his verses in this respect at least, — what syllables he made strong and what weak. So there remains this question, What syllables were stressed and how much? and its counterpart, What syllables were unstressed, were slurred, or even omitted altogether?

In Modern English we have the ear to guide us when we read, — or rather the memories of the sounds of words. Look at the following from Miss Preston's Translation of the *Georgics* of Vergil: —

"Yea, I have seen, when harvest days are early,
And the first reapers, the golden fields among,
Shredding from slender stems the ripened barley,
Shock as of all the winds together flung
In battle. Then the very stalks, uptorn
By the furious hurricane, aloft are borne,
And whirled into the blackness of the storm
The culms and the wingéd stubble. Or yet again
Far over the deep the clouds their squadrons form,
And the mighty mass rolls inland, foul with rain;
And, like a foe, the flood bursts out of the sky,
And the very æther topples from on high."

Five hundred years from now can any one, having only this text before him, say what sounds the characters stand for, see that the *a*'s have not the same value in *have*, *harvest*, *days*, *early*, *among*, and *all*, or tell whether *foe* is of one or two syllables, or whether the first or the last syllable of *blackness* is stressed? Fortunately the translator's preface, should it be preserved, will furnish an account of her versification, though expressed in terms that are ambiguous enough even now.

But let me try to describe the verse of Chaucer with as much freedom from any admixture of irrelevant conceptions as language will allow. There are in each verse five strong syllables. Before the first of the strong syllables, after the last, and between any two, stands one weak syllable; sometimes two; rarely, except at the end of a verse, none. The five stresses are of very unequal strength. One is usually very weak relatively to any one of the others. The remaining four then stand out with greater, though unequal, prominence. The weak syllables are not equally weak. The strong syllables are commonly longer than the weak. The strong syllables convey more of the meaning than the weak.

The division between lines usually coincides with a division between sense-groups. Not only is couplet separated from couplet in this way, but the first line

of a couplet from the second. A line usually contains two sense-groups. These share the line as equally as may be; two of the stronger accents going with the one, and two with the other. Sometimes a sense-group fills out the whole line, and it sometimes terminates unexpectedly even after the first or the fourth stronger accent. But the unexpected as a literary force is sparingly used. Chaucer does not make manifest that he had the conception of a verse-form that could survive such shocks persistently repeated.

"Time fleets:
That's worst! Because the pre-appointed age
Approaches. Fate is tardy with the stage
And crowd she promised. Lean he grows and pale,
Though restlessly at rest. Hardly avail
Fancies to soothe him. Time steals, yet alone
He tarries here! The earnest smile is gone.
How long this might continue, matters not;
—Forever, possibly; since to the spot
None come:"

It is questioned whether the verses are of equal duration, whether a verse is always made up of a definite number of parts that equal one another in duration, whether each such part begins or terminates at a stressed syllable or otherwise. I imagine that some ears require this uniformity, and that others are incapable of discerning it.

If two light syllables come between two heavy syllables, they are by some readers always reduced to one. By others they are never reduced to one. By other readers they are sometimes reduced to one and sometimes not, according to their nature and position.

I have stated a variety of usages, because it is well to try the effect of reading the lines in different ways, and to find, by discussion with associates, grounds for preferring one to the other, if there is any preference. I suppose there were differences among Chaucer's contemporaries not less than among readers of Chaucer to-day. It would not be strange if Chaucer himself read a verse at one time in one way, at another time in another. A verse is not like a line in a picture; and even that changes with changing light, and in the presence of other lines. A verse is as flexible as the lips that utter it. From uniformity in the former and from repose in the latter there is a broad range this side of distortion and caricature.

As a preparation for dealing with Chaucer's verse, observe the rendering of the following lines: —

"*Year following year, steals something every day.*"
"*To books and study give seven years complete.*"
"*Soft in her lap her laureate son reclines.*" — POPE

"*And grow incorporate into thee.*"
"*But for the unquiet heart and brain.*"
"*At earliest morning to the door.*"

"*Through prosperous floods his holy urn.*"
"*Some dolorous message knit below.*"
"*Tears of the widower, when he sees.*"
"*The violet of his native land.*"
"*And hears the ritual of the dead.*"
"*To many a flute of Arcady.*"
"*Last year, impetuously we sang.*" — TENNYSON.

Whan that Aprille with his shoures sote
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Trouthe and honour, fredom and courteisye
Al bismotered with his habergeoun
Under his belt he bar ful thriftily
Wel coude he dresse his takel yemanly
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe
That no drope ne fille upon hir brest
In curteisye was set ful moche hir lest
That in hir coppe there was no ferthing sene
Is likned til a fish that is waterlees
He hadde of gold wrought a ful curious pin

So moche of daliaunce and fair langage 211

Ful wel biloved and famulier was he 215

For to delen with no swich poraille 247

With a thredbare cope, as is a povre scoler 260

So estatly was he of his governaunce 281

Ful thredbare was his overeste courtepy 290

For he hadde geten him yet no benefice 291

Twenty bokes clad in blak or reed 294

Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre 298

Of studie took he most cure and most hede 303

His purchasing mighte nat been infect 320

And yet he semed bisier than he was 322

After the sondry sesouns of the yeer 347

Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in mewe 349

And many a breem and many a luce in stewe 350

That on his shine a mormal hadde he 386

A daggere hanginge on a laas hadde he
The hote somer hadde maad his hewe al broun
If that he faught and hadde the hyer hond
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond
With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake
And where engendred and of what humour
Of his diete mesurable was he
In al the parishe wyf ne was ther noon
And thryes hadde she been at Jerusalem
Wyd was his parishe and houses fer asonder
The ferreste in his parishe moche and lite
And shame it is if a preest take kepe
He was a shepherde and nought a mercenarie
In a tabard he rood upon a mere
A gentil Maunciple was ther of a temple
To make him live by his propre good

His berd was shave as ny as ever he can 588

His heer was by his eres ful round y-shorn 589

In youthe he lerned hadde a good mister 613

But hood for jolitee wered he noon 680

No berd hadde he ne never sholde have 689

THE TEXT

THE first book printed in English, *The Recuyell of Historyes of Troye*, was put to press at Bruges 1474 by William Caxton. About two years later set up his wooden printing-press at the sign of the d Pole in the Almonry of Westminster. Within a r years he had issued the first printed edition of e *Canterbury Tales* in that curious type which ks like Monkish script and has been since 1600 led Black Letter. Until 1478 the *Tales* had circued in manuscripts alone. There are still extant ne fifty of these, but none that can be safely asned to a date earlier than a quarter of a century er Chaucer's death, or proved to be a copy of what aucer himself wrote or dictated. Faithful pictures single pages have been published, and the frontis-

piece of this book is a sample of a part of one of th
reduced in size. The Chaucer Society has publish
facsimiles of different manuscripts. In six of th
eleven of the lines of the *Prologue* appear as follows

Bifil that/in that seson on a day
In Southwerk/at the Tabard as I lay
Redy/to wenden on my pilgrymage
To Caunterbury/with ful deuout corage
At nyght/were come/in to that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye
Of sondry folk/by aventure y-falle
In felaweshipe/and pilgrimes were they alle
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde
The chambres and the stables weren wyde
And wel we weren esed atte beste

Bifel that in that sesoun on a day
In Southwerk at the Tabard/as . I . lay
Redy to weenden/on my pilgrymage
To Caunterbury/with ful deuout corage
At nyght was come/in to that hostelrye
Wel . XXIX . in a compaignye
Of sondry folk/by auenture yfalle
In felaweshipe/and pilgrymes weere they alle
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde
The chambres and the stables/weeren wyde
And wel we weeren esed at the beste

Byfell that . in that sesoun on a daye.
In suthwerk . at the Thabard as I laye.
Redy to weenden . on my pilgrymage.

To Caunterbury . with full deuoute corage.
At nyght was come . in to that hostelrye.
Well nyne and twenty . in a companye.
Of sondry folk . by auenture falle.
In felschip . and pilgrymes were thei alle.
That toward Cauntirbury . wolde ryde.
The chambres . and the stables weren wyde.
And well were esid . at the beste.

bifill that on that seson on a day
in Suthwork atte Tabard as I lay
redy to wende/on my pilgrimage
to Caunterbury/with ful deuout corage
at night was come/in-to that hosterie
wel . XXIX. in a companye
of sondry folk/bi auenture I-falle
in feloshipe/and pilgremes were thei alle
that toward Caunterbury wolde ryde
the chambres and stablis weren wyde
and wel weren eased at the beste

Byfille that in that seson on aday
In southwerk atte Tabbard as I lay
Redy to wende on my pilgrymage
To Cantirbury with ful devout corage
At nyht was come in to that hostellerye
Wel nyne and twenty on a companye
Of sondry folk by auenture yfalle
In felaschipe and pilgrymes were they alle
That toward Cantirbery wolde ryde
The Chambres and stables weren wyde
And wel weren esed atte beste

It be-fel than in that sesone vpon a daie
In Suthewerke att the tabard as . I . taie
Redi to wende on my pilgremage.
To Canterburie with ful deuoute Corage.
At nyhte was come in-to that hostelleric
Wel Nyne and twente on a companye
Of sondre folke be auenture yfalle
In felauschipe and Pilgrimes were they alle
To-warde Camterburi that wolde ride
The Chambres and stables weren wyde
And wele weren esede at the beste

Each of these versions differs from another, a
from any printed text,—Skeat's, Pollard's, or L
dell's, for instance. There are no marks of punct
tion; but, as now, each verse has a line to itself a
begins with a capital, and in some instances subdi
sions of the lines are indicated by slanting strok
These devices leave the grouping of the lines in unc
tainty, and this is one source of the difference
punctuation in the modern editions.

The versions differ also in spelling; as witness
fil, Bifel, Byfell, bifill, Byfille, be-fel. Note also *wen*
and *wende, wolden* and *wolde, weren* and *were.* In
manuscript which is the most satisfactory of all
modern readers, *semeely, semely, semyly* occur withi
few lines. One may well ask if it is worth while
retain this diversity in a book intended for sch
youth or indeed if it is well to retain the anci

hography at all. The spelling of printed English
ow nearly uniform in all parts of the world. One
fortunate consequence of this is that the spelling
ceased to indicate the sounds spoken, different as
se may be in Australia and in America. But the
antages are great; so great indeed that this fixed
hography with all its inconsistencies has been
ended over the past. We know that Milton's
nunciation was not that of an educated Londoner
to-day, and what his spelling was one can see in
following specimen from the original edition of
radise Lost: —

Nor did they not perceave the evil plight
In which they were, nor the fierce pains not feel:
Yet to their Generals Voyce they soon obeyd
Innumerable. As when the potent Rod
Of Amrams *son in* Egypts *evill day*
Wav'd round the Coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud
Of Locusts, *warping on the Eastern Wind,*
That ore the Realm of impious Pharaoh *hung*
Like night and darken'd all the Land of Nile:

kespeare is a step farther removed. In our read-
we make no attempt to speak as he did, and in
editions for the use of the people's schools we
ot once think of retaining the contemporary spell-
In fact it has little to recommend it except to
minute student, as one may see by the following

extract from *Love's Labour's Lost* as it appears i
Quarto of 1598: —

> " *Let Fame, that all hunt after in their lyues,*
> *Liue registred vpon our brazen Tombes,*
> *And then grace vs, in the disgrace of death:*
> *When spight of cormorant deuouring Time,*
> *Thendeuour of this present breath may buy:*
> *That honour which shall bare his sythes keene edge*
> *And make vs heires of all eternitie.*
> *Therefore braue Conquerours, for so yee are,*
> *That warre agaynst your owne affections,*
> *And the hudge armie of the worldes desires.*
> *Our late edict shall strongly stand in force,*
> Nauar *shall be the wonder of the worlde,*
> *Our Court shalbe a lytlle Achademe,*
> *Still and contemplatyue in lyuing art.*"

This same system of uniform orthography of
has been extended by some editors to the work
Chaucer. Any text or pronunciation, it is asserte
them, will be but an approximation to Chaucer's
which was hardly faultless, we may assume; certa
not ideal. Neither spelling nor sounds, even i
knew them, are facts in the life of the fourteenth
tury, or in the career of Chaucer, at any rate as
that concern any one but a professional philolo
What is wanted is the meaning, the feeling that
with the words; and that they claim we can get
readily and pleasurably from a text in modern s

g, pronounced in some modern wise, with thanks for much of the song-craft as may survive.

I might ask what have we then of the fourteenth ntury — what knowledge, what relic — that is more an a mere approximation to the reality of the four- nth century itself? It is hardly a reason for re- ting the texts and pronunciations which are offered t they are but rough approximations to what Chau- wrote and spoke. The fact is that the current of aucer's influence has swept in many different direc- ns. There are modernizations, translations, imita- ns, adaptations of *The Canterbury Tales*, and there l be; among which choice is free. But school youth uld be required to withdraw their attention from word as it is to-day, with its present spelling and nunciation, and all the associations that these imply, l try to see and hear and speak the words and think ir meanings as they were in the fourteenth century. give but one instance of what will find ample illus- ion in every page, Chaucer's *schoures*, *showres*, *ures*, differs not only in spelling and pronunciation n our *showers*, but in meaning also; that is to say, vhat it suggests, not in what a glossary can define o mean. Or is it a mere whim of my own mind, deserving to be adopted by other minds, that leads to see and hear in *shoures* drops of water falling n a darkened sky on field and river, while *showers*

are predicted in newspapers by those who know of wind whence it cometh and whither it goeth?

But this is difficult, one objects. The principle plied in the retention of early forms of the langu in order to preserve the freshness of the early thou would require one to be seated in a Chaucer *chambre*, clothed in a Chaucerian *cote-hardie*, and to reading from a Chaucerian manuscript by the li of a Chaucerian candle. That is just what I w do, and much more besides, even to setting the S of Kent back five hundred years, and taking four d in going with a band of pilgrims from Southwer Caunterbury. That is what we try to do in ho and theatres, in tableaux and masquerades, in sta and pictures, and certainly in fancies and imag tions. We may see nothing but the time-worn t waking only broken echoes from the song of " morning star of poesy who made his music heard low;" but this we can see, and behold in it, "like sights in a magic crystal ball," Chaucer's England

And yet the text which you here see put, th not modernized, has been made more uniform most others. *Shoures* has not been changed to *sho breeth* to *breath*, *palmeres* to *palmers*, *felaweshipe* t *lowship;* silent and mispronounced letters have been introduced, however useful they may now us in distinguishing for the eye words that canno

tinguished by the ear; and, of course, letters that
re since become silent have been retained when
y were pronounced in the fourteenth century. But
ave not thought it desirable to trouble the reader
h the fact that *seson* was sometimes written, but
the same in meaning and pronunciation as the
un that was found in other passages; and as long
drought was written in some places, it did not seem
essary to write *droght* in others with the accom-
ying explanation that it was pronounced like the
ner. Still no one consideration has been allowed
prevail to the exclusion of every other; and this
ch may be said that in some cases where there are
y probabilities, and such probabilities as admit of
numerical evaluation, two minds, or even one mind
ifferent times, have not come to the same conclu-
. If you go beyond this book in the study of
ucer or of Middle English, you will have much to
n, but I trust not a great deal to unlearn.

THE LANGUAGE

HE following remarks concern the language in
pt and in print; the language in speech has already
considered. These two modes of utterance differ
tly from each other. Speech may be intelligible,

correct, even elegant, but script has too few signs
be in any considerable degree the counterpart
speech. It has, however, some resources of its own
use in compensation. Such are different spellings
words which sound alike; changes in the order
words; punctuation-marks and other distinguish
signs which have direct correspondences in the thou
series and not in the sound-series; the arrangem
of the characters on the page; and especially the
that all the parts of the visible expression exis
the same time, and admit of easy comparison, w
the parts of the audible utterance are successive.

Aside from the general aspect of the writte
printed page, and from some minor matters of pun
ation, we find in Chaucer's language: —

1. Words that have gone out of use together
their meanings: *anlaas, courtepy, falding, gipoun, ho
geoun*, and a few others.

2. Words that have gone out of use, and bee
placed by other words of like meaning: *abyen, ap
deduyt, lechecraft, swinken, taas.*

3. Words that are still in use but with cha
meanings: *minister, wit, bacheler, blankmanger*,
many others, if meaning is used to denote all th
word suggests, and slight changes are considered.

4. Words that are still in use with uncha
meaning: *Aprille, bathed, slepen, melodye*, and

any more; and yet it would often be very difficult decide whether a word belongs to this class or the receding, unless meaning is confined to the significa-on which can be exhibited in a dictionary.

Of the words that have been retained, there are few at have not been altered in spelling: *slepen* and *ep, sesoun* and *season, chambres* and *chambers, felawe-ipe* and *fellowship.* The complicated relations among anges of spelling, changes of pronunciation, and anges of meaning are not easy to ascertain or exhibit, d few generalizations or brief summaries are possible. Forms that differed slightly, as *slepen, slepe, slep'*, ve mingled into one, and the original differences of eaning, if such existed, are expressed otherwise or sregarded.

Different parts of a sentence often expressed the me thing. This I call Multiple Indication. Modern nglish has passed to Single Indication, though it ll retains some instances of Double and even Triple dication. In *Tho foure yonge men riden yesterday,* find expressed seven times that there were more uths than one; once by *tho,* twice by *foure,* once by *nge,* once by *men,* twice by *riden. Tho* is a plural m; *four* is plural by its definition; the termination n *foure* and *yonge* implies plurality; *men* is plural contrasted with *man,* the need of a special form ke *min,* say, that would mean either) being rarely

felt; both parts of *rid-en* denote that there was m
than one rider. In *Those four young men rode yesterd*
the indications of more than one are reduced to thr
for *rode* is neither singular nor plural. Chaucer wo
have said *he rood*, but *they riden;* we say *he rode*
they rode, and one cannot tell by *rode* anything ab
the number of the riders. We still retain Double
dication in *rode* and *yesterday*, both of which refer u
a past; the former vaguely, the latter more definit

I have said that the *e* in *yonge* was a sign of plu
ity; but it had come to be the sign of many o
things, and often of nothing at all. The *e* then
no longer any function so far as the mere significa
was concerned, and gradually disappeared, now h
now there, in this phrase and in that phrase, with
class of the people and with another class, in one s
of composition and in another style, as sentimen
structure determined. It was written where it
not heard, and heard where it was not written; bu
is evident from what has been said, its presence o
sence rarely affected the determination of the mea

Such expressions as *where as that, there as, wh*
hat, originated at a time when the component wo
whan, wher, ther, etc., had not the restricted mea
and use which they have now. *Where* and *when*
now taken the place of these phrases.

The merging of several like words into one, th

roach to Single Indication, the omission of parts of hrases, mark differences that five hundred years have ade in the language. The changes in detail are umerous enough, as you cannot fail to note when you mpare with the original your written translation to Modern English.

Meanings are expressed in Modern English by marks punctuation, by differences in letters, as capitals and alics, by the apostrophe, and a few similar signs, to extent altogether unknown to Chaucer's English.

NOUNS

The plural is like the singular: *caas, hors, neet, paas, ound, sheep, swyn, vers, yeer.*

The plural differs from the singular by vowel-ange: *foot, feet; goos, gees; man, men.*

The plural adds *n* to the singular, often with other anges: *asshe, asshen; brothor, bretheren; child, chil-en; doughter, doughtren; eye, eyen; ox, oxen; suster, stren; too, toon; ye, yen.*

The plural adds *es* to the singular, with doubling of final consonant when necessary: *lord, lordes; god, ldes; crop, croppes; palmer, palmeres; teer, teres.*

The plural adds *s* to the singular: *bargayn, bar-yns; nacioun, naciouns.*

The singular has sometimes two plurals: *too, toos d toon.*

The genitive ends in *es*: *his lordes sheep, his lor*
or *his lords' sheep; a swerdes lengthe, a sword's lengt*
Except the following: *his lady grace, our lady ve*
at the sonne upriste, the rose colour, herte blood,
fader soule, a kinges brother sone, to Venus temple.

The relation of the meaning of a noun to the me
ing of any other part of a sentence was expressed
the absence of noun-inflections by the inflections
other words, especially pronouns, by special wo
by position, or left unexpressed or contradicted in
pression, when the relation itself was obvious or i
versible.

The noun itself is not infrequently omitted wher
meaning is pointed to by these and other indications

Right as the hunters in the regne of Trace,
That stondeth at the gappe with a spere,
Whan hunted is the leoun or the bere,
And hereth him come rushing in the greves,
And breketh bothe bowes and the leves,
And thinketh, 'heer cometh my mortel enemy,
Withoute faile he moot be deed or I.'

PRONOUNS

In the Glossary will be found a translation of e
peculiar form, and in the Notes a fuller explana
in at least one instance of its occurrence. Here cer
differences of idiom are noted.

Shaltow, wiltow are for *shalt thou, wilt thou.* *Ye* is subject-form, and *you* object-form: *Ye finden me, I finde you.* *Hit* and *his* are *it* and *its.* *Hem* is *them.* *My, myn, mine* are *my;* the two last also *mine.* Similarly with *thy, thyn, thine.* *His* and *hise* mean *his; her* and *here,* as well as *hir* and *hire* mean *her* or *hers,* and *their* or *theirs* *Our* and *oure* mean *our* or *ours,* and similarly with *your* and *youre.*

Tharray, th'array, the array, illustrates the treatment of *the* before a vowel. *That oon, that other* equal *the one, the other.* *Atte* means *at the.* *Tho* is sometimes to be translated *those.*

Which, the whiche is translated by *who* or *whom* as well as by *which.* *Swich . . . which* is *such . . . as.* *That . . . he* is frequent as a relative pronoun: —

Al were they sore y-hurt, and namely oon,
That with a spere was thirled his brest boon. 2710

Whose breast-bone was pierced by a spear. The clause introduced by *who* or *which* is often preceded by *that*: —

Than shal I yeve Emelya to wive
To whom that fortune yeveth so fair a grace. 1861

Men, not the plural but a weakened form of *man,* is used with a singular verb in the sense of *one* or *some one* or *any one*: —

Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte. 149
For alday meteth men at unset stevene. 1524

Som is singular, and *som . . . som* means *one . . another* : —

Som in his bed, som in the depe see. 303

I see me, thou seest thee can hardly mean anythin else than *I see myself, thou seest thyself. He seeth hi* may mean *he sees himself;* and *they seyn hem, they se themselves.*

He . . . he is translated *this one . . . that one* in : —

Somme sayde he loked grim, and he wolde fighte. 2
In : —

And he him hurtleth with his hors adoun. 26

translate : *One dashes down another.*

The view, whence the name, that a pronoun is a wo which takes the place of a noun is less useful than t view that it is a word of wide applicability whi accordingly names what may be more definitely ind cated otherwise. The former view points to a relati to preceding or following words ; the latter to thin and thoughts however they may have been or are to designated. The former view prevails with those w have to talk about language ; the latter would prev with those who have to talk about other things only, they could give any account of their own usage. T presence and absence of the pronoun then should determined by its utility. If nouns and verbs h suitable inflections, it would be introduced solely

the sake of the meaning of its stem. If it should retain its inflection while verbs and nouns lost theirs, it might be used for the meaning of its inflections alone. Chaucer treats even nouns and verbs with respect to their insertion, repetition, or omission as freely as he does pronouns. My purpose in saying this is to encourage the practice of studying the meaning of each instance, as of *him* in the subjoined quotation, rather than that of referring it, as here, to some such rule as: A noun is often repeated in the form of a pronoun: —

Now been thise listes maad, and Theseus,
That at his grete cost arrayed thus
The temples and the theatre every del,
Whan it was done, him liked wonder well. 2092

Here *him* shows the relation of *Theseus* to *liked:* it pleased Theseus.

And al was conscience and tendre herte. 150

That is, she was all conscience and tenderness of heart.

For unto swich a worthy man as he
Acorded nat, etc. 244

It did not accord, was not suitable.

That I was of their felaweshipe anon;
And made forward erly for to rise, 33

We made an agreement.

Ther was noon auditour coude on him winne.

Who coude, etc. Though it could be proved that th clause once began with *who*, yet in fact *coude on hi winne* is an adjective equivalent to *able to winne him.* Another way of describing the construction is say that one *auditour* is enough, and that the repetiti of the word or of any substitute for the word is reaso ably avoided.

Of smale houndes hadde she, that she fedde,

Her "having" of little dogs she fed. There is real nothing to be supplied. The sentence says all it w meant to, and the writer or hearer of it never thoug of "some" or "a number."

A Monk ther was, a fair for the maistrye.

After *a fair*, there is no omission of *man* or *person one ;* these were sometimes used, and not, as no nearly always. Chaucer did say: —

A knight ther was, and that a worthy man,

and

I have the moste stedefast wyf,
And eek the mekeste oon that bereth lyf. — E. 1552.

ADJECTIVES

The few comparatives or superlatives that might to be recognized as such are explained in Notes

Glossary. Adjectives of more than one syllable are rarely inflected: *swete, daungerous.* Monosyllables often take *e* as plurals, in address, before proper names, after *the, this,* and *that,* and in some other conditions: *a yong man, the yonge man.* This distinction is not observed in Modern English: *a young man, the young man.*

Of all is expressed sometimes by *aller, alder; our aller, of us all; hir aller, of them all; alderbest, best of all.*

VERBS

The following presents are alike in all verbs, and one model will suffice: —

Present Indicative.	Present Subjunctive.
I binde	I binde
thou bindest	thou binde
he bindeth	he binde
we binden	we binden
ye binden	ye binden
they binden	they binden

Present Infinitive.	Present Participle.
binden	bindinge

Forms are sometimes shortened and, in consequence, otherwise changed: *seyest, seyst; lyeth, lyth; biddeth,*

bit; bresteth, brest; rideth, rit; sitteth, sit; binden binde; bindinge, binding; seyen, seyn; gooen, goon.

Binden is one of a class of verbs that form the past singular by vowel change alone, and are hence called Strong Verbs: —

Past Indicative.	Past Subjunctive.
I band	I bounde
thou band	thou bounde
he band	he bounde
we bounden	we bounden
ye bounden	ye bounden
they bounden	they bounden

All other verbs are called Weak Verbs. Such ar *loven, I lovede; clothen, I cladde; heren, I herde; greten I grette; tellen, I tolde; seken, I soughte.* The terms nations are alike in all.

Past Indicative.	Past Subjunctive.
I soughte	I soughte
thou soughtest	thou soughte
he soughte	he soughte
we soughten	we soughten
ye soughten	ye soughten
they soughten	they soughten

Forms are sometimes shortened: *lovede, loved, lovde.*

The Imperative. The plural is always *eth;* th

singular in Strong Verbs has no termination, in Weak Verbs ends in *e*: —

bind, bindeth *grete, greteth*

The plural is sometimes interchanged with the singular.

The past participle of Strong Verbs ends in *n*, of Weak Verbs in *d* or *t*: *bounden, drawen, loved, caught.* *n* is often dropped: *bounde.* *e* is sometimes added when the participle is plural: *boundene, caughte.* *y* is sometimes prefixed: *y-bounde, y-caught.*

Obscure, anomalous, and compound forms will be found in the Glossary.

Chaucer's *rood* indicates one rider, his *riden* more than one rider; our *rode* is neutral, indicates the presence at some past time of a rider, or of some riders, or of all the riders, or of all riders. *Rode* might better be called non-numeral. Chaucer had no non-numeral form, and was forced to say either one or more riders, even when the fact was sufficiently indicated otherwise, or needed no prominence, or was inconsistent with other indications. Non-numeral forms often develop from numeral forms; and those familiar with the former, imagine them in the latter. There is a difference then between our *And after rode the queen and Emily* and Chaucer's *And after rood the quene and Emelye.*

It is usually said that some word is omitted or understood or to be supplied in the following: —

A wrethe of gold, arm-greet, of huge wighte,
Upon his heed, set ful of stones brighte,
Of fine rubies and of diamaunts. 214

The oral utterance of the preceding with prope stresses and inflection would not suggest any such lack; *was* indeed can be introduced at several points but it adds nothing to what is already indicated by the punctuation and connection. The tendency t supply words that add nothing to the sense should b resisted, unless you can prove that such words wer once present in an expression.

Finde, finden, to finde, to finden, for to finde, for t finden, are six forms which Chaucer might have use in most cases where we use either *find, to find,* or *find ing, of finding, in finding, by finding,* or *that one finds may find, should find,* and so on: —

Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes.

The holy blisful martir for to seke.

In hope to stonden in his lady grace.

. . . for him liste ride so.

What sholde he studie, and make himselven wood
Upon a book in cloistre alwey to poure.

Wel coude he singe and pleyen on a rote.

It is nat honeste, it may nat avaunce
For to delen with no swich poraille.

Ne was so worldly for to have office;
For him was levere have at his beddes heed
Twenty bokes . . . 294

And bisily gan for the soules preye. 301

But of his craft to rekene wel his tides, 401

In al this world ne was ther noon him lik,
To speke of phisik and of surgerye 413

No wonder is a lewed man to ruste. 502

Wel loved he garleek, oynons. and eek lekes,
And for to drinken strong wyn reed as blood. 634

Y-sworn ful depe and ech of us til other,
That nevere, for to dyen in the peyne,
Til that the deeth departe shal us tweyne,
Neither of us in love to hindren other. 1135

And eek it is nat lykly, al thy lyf
To stonden in hir grace, namore shal I. 1173

And thereto he was strong and big of bones
To doon that any wight can him devise. 1425

Chaucer's tenses are the same as ours, but he uses the present for the past or for the future more freely, sometimes passing from one to the other in the same sentence: —

And in his armes he hem alle up hente,
And hem conforteth in ful good entente. 958

His baner he desplayeth and forth rood. 966

And sente anoon Ipolita the quene
* * * * * * * *
And forth he rit. 974

Few subjunctives exist in Modern English. *I, thou, he, we, you, they, be; I, thou, he, were;* but no other form of the verb *to be; thou find, he find,* but no other than these two forms of the verb *to find,* and no more than these two of any other verb whatever. *I were* and *he were* are the only ones even of these few that most of us ever hear; nor does any one discern much difference between *if I were wealthy* and *if I had wealth,* when each is followed by *I would help the deserving only.* In Chaucer the subjunctives are numerous. The translation into Modern English retains some of the terminations, drops others where there was Double Indication, and replaces others with *may, might,* etc.

As it were a castel wal. 405

Ware the sonne in his ascencioun
Ne finde yow nat repleet of humours hote;
And if it do, I dar wel leye a grote, 414

If thou tomorwe wende, 427

And though that he were worthy, he was wys, 0

Er it were day, as was hir wone to do, 10

Now demeth as yow liste, ye that can, 13

ADVERBS

In order to understand Chaucer it is not necessary to know either the qualities common to all adverbs, o

the mark of any class of adverbs, or even to have ever heard of adverbs; and it is not desirable to be thinking about adverbs when one is reading Chaucer. A reason for wishing to know whether an expression is an adverb or not is to ascertain thereby the meaning of the sentence. There is no test by which adverbs may be discriminated on mere inspection, but often only on subtle combination of slight indications, and the meaning is generally reached long before the process by which it is reached can be discerned or described.

Some words are always adverbs: *often, specially.*

Some words are never adverbs: *lovest, findest, palmeres.*

Some words are adverbs in one sentence, and not adverbs in another:—

They foynen ech at other wonder longe. 1654
Ther saugh I many another wonder storie. 2073

Where no tests are discoverable, the sentence has more than one meaning, and what was intended must be learned from some other source.

Adverbs are formed from adjectives by adding *e, liche, lich, ly, ely: righte, royalliche, pitously, softely.* The test of derivation or termination guides less often than the test of position; and in this respect Chaucer's English agrees with our own. Moreover, in the Notes

and the Glossary, adverbs are translated by adverbs and individual peculiarities are treated as they arise

All negation is effected by particles either alone o in composition: —

In all this world ne was there noon him lyk. 41
There nas baillif, ne herde, ne other hine,
That he ne knew his sleighte and his covine. 6
He was nat pale as a forpined goost. 2
And he nas nat right fat, I undertake. 2
I nam but dead. 11
Hir brighte heer was kempt, untressed al. 22

A negative applied to a negative would in genera destroy the negation, and two negatives applied to th same word would in general emphasize it. Negative applied to different words in a sentence direct us t remove from the meaning of the sentence the meanin of each of those words: *No wine ne drank she* rul out in the picture both the wine and the drinking it. There is neither inconsistency nor emphasis, bu a sort of Multiple Indication, since the removal either would have sufficed. Chaucer could say, *N wine drank she*, or *Wine ne drank she*, but instances the repeated negations are found on every page.

GENEALOGY OF ENGLISH

Among the hundreds of known languages, livi and dead, the following and a few more are like o

another and unlike all others in certain aspects, and are hence called a family of languages, and, from their geographical distribution, named the Indo-European:—

I. Indian (Sanskrit, Pali, Bengali, etc.).
II. Iranian (Avestan, Old Persian, etc.).
III. Armenian.
IV. Greek.
V. Italic (Latin, Oscan, Umbrian, etc. From Latin come Italian, Provençal, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Roumanian).
VI. Celtic (Irish, Manx, Gaelic, Welsh, Cornish, Breton).
VII. Slavonic (Russian, Bulgarian, Polish, Bohemian, Servian).
VIII. Baltic (Lithuanian, Lettish, Old Prussian).
IX. Teutonic,
  (*A*) East Teutonic (Gothic).
  (*B*) Scandinavian (Icelandic, Dano-Norwegian, Swedish).
  (*C*) West Teutonic,
    (*a*) High Teutonic (German).
    (*b*) Low Germanic (Old Frisian, Anglo-Saxon or Old English, Old Frankish, Frisian, English, Platt-deutsch, Dutch, Flemish).

Many an Englishman has added to his mother-tongue borrowings from other languages, living and dead, related or unrelated.

PARTITIONS OF ENGLISH

The fifth-century conquerors of Romanized Britain the Jutes and the Saxons as well as the Angles, spoke what was called English. The term Anglo-Saxon has been applied to one stage of this language, called Old English below in the table from Sweet's *A New English Grammar;* while Old English has been applied to a different stage, which is called Middle English in the table:—

Early Old English (E. of Alfred)	700–900
Late Old English (E. of Ælfric)	900–1100
Transition Old English (E. of Layamon)	1100–1200
Early Middle English (E. of the Ancren Riwle) .	1200–1300
Late Middle English (E. of Chaucer)	1300–1400
Transition Middle English (Caxton E.)	1400–1500
Early Modern English (Tudor E.; E. of Shakspere)	1500–1650
Late Modern English	1650–

English, during the Middle English period, appeared in five dialects: Northern, East Midland, West Midland, South-western, and Kentish. Chaucer's language is mainly East Midland. There were influences independent of his, that could have made this dialect the standard. It has become the standard; and

Chaucer's poems are more intelligible to-day than poems written in the other dialects.

THE MAN

THE poet sings to strangers of Chanticleer and Partlet, of Palamon and Arcite, of an imaginary band of pilgrims. If Chaucer appears in the poem, he may be transformed, as everything else is transformed, by the imagination. A single stately line, —

"*The chambres and the stables weren wide,*" 28

gives the Tabard whatever dimensions we may wish. The art that omits from the Prologue a description of Chaucer, to introduce later the host's bantering characterization of him, tells in what realm we are: —

"*What man artow?*" *quod he;*
"*Thou lokest as thou woldest finde an hare*
For ever upon the ground I see thee stare.

"*Approche neer, and loke up merily.*
Now war you, sirs, and let this man have place;
He in the waast is shape as well as I;
This were a popet in an arm tenbrace
For any womman, smal and fair of face.
He semeth elvish by his contenaunce.
For unto no wight doth he daliaunce." — B. 1894.

The man appears again as the poet chooses to rep resent him in: —

> " *Wherfor, as I seyde, y-wis,*
> *Jupiter considereth this,*
> *And also, beau sir, other thinges:*
> *That is, that thou hast no tidinges*
> *Of Loves folk, if they be glade,*
> *Ne of nought elles that God made;*
> *And nought only fro fer contree*
> *That ther no tiding comth to thee,*
> *But of thy verray neighebores,*
> *That dwellen almost at thy dores,*
> *Thou herest neither that nor this;*
> *For whan thy labour doon al is*
> *And hast y-maad thy rekeninges,*
> *In stede of reste and newe thinges*
> *Thou gost hoom to thy house anoon;*
> *And, also domb as any stoon,*
> *Thou sittest at another boke,*
> *Til fully daswed is thy loke,*
> *And livest thus as an heremite,*
> *Although thyn abstinence is lite.*"
>
> — *The House of Fame.* 66

Even the poor verse in which he laments his poverty ought not to be taken literally, unless confirmed from other sources: —

> " *Now, purs, that be to me my tives light,*
> *And saveour, as doun in this worlde here,*
> *Out of this toune help me through your might,*
> *Sin that ye wole nat been my tresorere;*

For I am shave as nye as any frere.
But yit I pray unto your curtesye:
Beth hevy ageyn, or elles mot I dye."

The verses of brother poets say nothing about his life and only put in words the admiration they feel. Here is the stanza of Hoccleve's poem, *The Governail of Princes,* that explains the origin of the portrait: —

"*Although his lyf be queynt, the resemblaunce*
Of him hath in me so fresh lyflinesse
That, to put othere men in remembraunce
Of his persone, I have heer his lyknesse
Do make, to this ende, in sothfastnesse,
That they that have of him lest thought and minde,
By this peynture may ageyn him finde."

The little that we know of the man's doings as distinguished from the poet's imaginings is derived from contemporary records. These were carefully written and have been dutifully preserved. Some had been used, however, in binding books, and were discovered as recently as 1857 by Dr. Edward A. Bond. The language of these records is a much abbreviated Latin or French: —

Jur divsor Hundr Com pdci, alias, scilt tmio sci Hilar . . . coram Dno Rege apud Westm psent, quod Ric Brerelay felonice depdavit Galfrm Chauser, etc.

Cuid Paltomakare Lond pro j. paltok . . . lib

Galfr. Chaucer de cons dono dne ib, eiisd die et ac IIII.s.

From such sources conclusions have been drawn which are here set down in part without any attempt to assign even vaguely the degree of their probability.

The father of Geoffrey was John Chaucer, citizen and vintner of London. Full fifteen years after Geoffrey's birth, an accountant in the household of Elizabeth de Burgh, Countess of Ulster and wife of Lionel third son of Edward III, records that at London in 1358 there was furnished to Galfridus Chaucer a pal tock, or short cloak, a pair of red and black breeches and a pair of shoes, the whole costing seven shillings (one hundred, present value); and at Hatfield, Yorkshire, in December, 1357, there was paid to Galfridus Chaucer two shillings and sixpence for necessaries at Christmas.

In 1359, according to testimony which Chaucer himself gave in 1386, he was taken prisoner near Retters in France. In 1360 he was ransomed, the king himself contributing the large sum of two hundred and forty pounds present value.

In 1367 Edward III granted him an annual pension for life of twenty marks (two hundred pounds present value), in consideration of his past and future services. In the document he was styled *dilectus valett' noster*. *Noster dilectus* (Our esteemed) implies appre-

ation. *Valettus* is valet, or yeoman of the king's bed-chamber. After 1372 he is called in the records *armiger* or *scutifer* (squire). The duties of these attendants are thus enumerated in Edward IV's *Household Book:* —

DE VALECTIS CAMERE REGIS

"Yeomen of Chambre iiij, to make beddis, to beare or hold torches, to sett boardis, to apparell all chambers, and such othir services as the Chamberlaine, or Vshers of Chambre, comaunde or assigne; to attend the chambre; to watche the King by course; to goe in messages, &c.

"Squires of Houshold xl: or moe if it please the Kinge, by the aduise of his highe Counsell; to be chosen men of their possession, worship, and wisdome; Also to be of sundrie shires, by whome it may be knowne the disposition of the Countries: And of these, to be continually in this court, twenty squires attendantes on the Kinges person, in ryding and goeing at all times; And to helpe serve his table from the Surueying board, and from other places, as the Assewer will assigne: . . . These Esquires of housold of old be accustomed, winter and summer, in afternoones and in eueninges, to drawe to Lordes Chambres within Court, there to keep honest company after there Cunninge, in talking of Cronicles of Kinges, and of others Pollicies,

or in pipeing or in harpeing, songinges, or other actes marcealls, to helpe to occupie the Court, and accom panie estraingers, till the time require of departing.'

It is recorded that in 1374 Philippa Chaucer re ceived part of her pension by the hands of Geoffrey her husband. A pension of ten marks yearly had been granted to a Philippa Chaucer in 1366, then in the service of the queen. John of Gaunt gave a pension of ten pounds to Philippa Chaucer in 1372; and in 1374 he gave a pension of ten pounds to Chaucer and his wife for good services rendered by them to the said Duke, his Consort, and his mother the Queen. Were there two Philippas, and what was the date of Chaucer's marriage, and what was the maiden name of his wife, are problems suggested by these and other records; but the fact established is that Chaucer was already married in 1374.

Entries now and then of money borrowed, of letters of protection against creditors while abroad, of pensions paid to Chaucer directly, or through the hand of another, serve to show that Chaucer was going to and fro between France and England, sometimes for the war, sometimes on the King's service.

For about eleven months from December, 137 Chaucer was journeying as far as Genoa and Flo ence. He was joined in a commission with two ci

zens of Genoa, to treat with that republic for the choice of some port in England where its merchants might settle and trade.

By a writ dated at Windsor on the 23d of April, St. George's Day, 1374, a pitcher of wine daily was granted to him for life, to be received in the port of London from the hands of the King's butler. Writs were usually issued in the King's name, and payment in kind long survived the introduction of money. A century later Edward IV's *Household Book* says of the Squires of the Household: "Every each of them taketh for his Liueery at night dimidium gallon ale; And for winter season, each of them taketh two candles parris, one faggott or elles dimidium tallwood; and when any of them is present in Court, him is allowed for daily wagis in the Checkerroolle, seauen pence halfe penny, and cloathing winter and sommer, or elles fortie shillinges." In lieu of his pitcher of wine Chaucer himself, in 1377, received money; which he exchanged the year following for a pension of twenty marks.

It was in this same year, 1374, that he leased from the Corporation of London the dwelling-house over the gate of Aldgate; was appointed Comptroller of the Customs and Subsidy of Wools, Skins, and Tanned Hides in the Port of London, being required, like his predecessors, to write the rolls of his office with his own hand, and to be continually present.

In 1375 he was twice appointed guardian. From one of these wardships, which, however, was of short duration, he subsequently received one hundred and four pounds.

In 1376 the King granted to Chaucer, as Comptroller of the Customs, the price of some wool that had been forfeited for failure to pay the duty. Toward the end of the same year Sir John Burley was paid some thirteen pounds for performing some secret service, and Chaucer, who is described as being in Burley's *comitiva*, or retinue, was paid about half as much.

In February, 1377, Chaucer was associated with Sir Thomas Percy (afterward Earl of Worcester) in a secret mission to Flanders. Ten pounds were advanced to Chaucer for expenses, less than one-third of the amount advanced to Sir Thomas Percy. On the 11th of April he received with his own hands twenty pounds at the exchequer, which the King had given him as a reward for divers journeys he had made in his service abroad. On the twentieth of the same month letters of protection, as was usual, were issued to him, to terminate on the 1st of August ensuing. These entries alone may not prove that Chaucer was concerned in the embassies that went abroad in this year to treat of peace or of the marriage of the Prince of Wales; but they prove that he was still one of the King's esquires and that he enjoyed the confidence and favour of King

Edward III to the last. The King died in June of this year.

But Chaucer continued in favour with the advisers of the boy-king. In 1378 he had some share in an embassy to negotiate the King's marriage with a daughter of Charles V of France. It is true his name does not appear with those of the ambassadors, but he was afterward paid his expenses for going to France about this time with the same object. In the spring of this year Chaucer went in the retinue of Sir Edward Berkeley on a mission to Lombardy to treat with Bernabo Visconti, Lord of Milan, and the celebrated Sir John Hawkwood, on some military matter, the nature of which is not indicated. Here these records of payment of wages and pensions and expenses, of appointments to serve in some undefined capacity for some unexplained purpose, — records that differ from thousands of others only in containing the name of Chaucer, and serve rather to check exuberant speculation than to distinguish Chaucer from the crowd, — seem about to disclose something more; but the name of John Gower brings with it no further information than that he is appointed to be an agent of Chaucer during his intended absence of one year.

So nothing is added to

> "*O moral Gower, this book I directe*
> *To thee.*" — Chaucer's *Troilus and Creseyde*

and

"*Grete wel Chaucer when ye mete*
As my disciple and my poete." — Gower's *Confessio Amant*

that may explain the relation between the two men Now Gower was not only a poet of three literatures but a man of substance, a Kentish man who dwelt i Southwark, who told the same stories as Chauce while they both borrowed from the same sources, not from each other; and yet the three instances ju pointed out are the only direct evidence of any conne tion between them.

To Chaucer's previous appointment was added 1382 that of Comptroller of the Petty Customs the Port of London, with leave to exercise his offi by deputy. At the end of 1384 he was granted month's leave of absence, and in the February follo ing the privilege of employing a deputy in his o comptrollership.

Through October and November, 1386, he sat in t Parliament at Westminster as one of the Knights the Shire for Kent. It was not the least among t commendations of the 'Frankeleyn' that he had be Knight of the Shire. It was at this time that Chau gave evidence in behalf of Sir Richard Scrope agai Sir Robert Grosvenor's claim to the arms "Azure bend Or." Here he speaks for himself, does not lie

himself to answering questions, but tells a story which would be effective with a modern jury: —

"He said that he was once in Friday Street in London, and as he was walking in the street, he saw hanging a new sign made of the said arms, and he asked what inn that was that had hung out these arms of Scrope? and one answered him and said, No, Sir, they are not hung out for the arms of Scrope, nor painted there for those arms, but they are painted and put there by a knight of the county of Chester, whom men call Sir Robert Grosvenor; and that was the first time he had ever heard speak of Sir Robert Grosvenor, or of his ancestors, or of any other bearing the name of Grosvenor."

But great changes were preparing in England; Chaucer's circumstances were changing too. The connection between the two might be divined by a man of great learning and broad experience, but could never be verified by any one. In October, 1386, his house in Aldgate was let to another tenant, and in December of that year his two offices were held by Adam Yerdeley and Henry Gisors. John of Gaunt had been superseded by the Duke of Gloucester in the administration of the government, and a commission had been issued for inquiring into the state of the subsidies and customs. Now John of Gaunt had been Chaucer's patron, and had granted a pension to Chaucer's wife.

About this time Chaucer lost his wife. Her pension of course ceased with death; and in May, 1388, he made an assignment of his own pensions. In 1389 Richard II restored the Lancastrian party to favour. Soon afterward Chaucer was appointed Clerk of the King's Works at the Palace of Westminster, the Tower of London, several royal manors and lodges and at the Mews for the King's Falcons at Charing Cross. For this he received thirty shillings a day present value. In the following year other duties were assigned him: the repair of the roadways along the Thames; the repair of St. George's Chapel, Windsor; putting up scaffolds in Smithfield for the King and Queen to see the jousts in May; the care, as forester, of North Petherton Park in Somersetshire,—multifarious duties enough, not unattended with risk of a certain sort; for Chaucer was robbed of the King's money twice in one day at different places by members of the same gang of highwaymen. Chaucer was indemnified, and the member of the gang who appears to have told the truth as informer against his comrades was hanged because he was defeated when challenged to make his words good by battle. Others were hanged later.

By the summer of 1391 he had lost both clerkship and must have been in straitened circumstances, to judge by the fact that even after he had been granted

by King Richard in 1394 a pension of twenty pounds, he received petty advances from the government and other sources on account of his pension. In 1398 King Richard granted him letters of protection against enemies suing him, and a few months later a tun of wine yearly for life.

On the 30th of September, 1399, Richard was deposed. Henry IV, the son of Chaucer's old patron, within four days after he came to the throne, doubled Chaucer's pension. On Christmas Eve, 1399, he obtained a lease of a tenement in the garden of St. Mary's Chapel, Westminster, for fifty-three years, or life. It is probably here that he died, on the 25th of October, 1400. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, in St. Benet's Chapel. The present tombstone of gray marble was erected by Nicholas Brigham in 1556.

Why do we want to know more about the Man? Have we not the words of the Poet? But words do not interpret themselves, do not carry about with themselves their own significations. Some read with delight, while they attach to the sentences just such meanings as they please; may charm us, too, with their divinations. We may even admire the Chaucer they have made. But for others the question remains, what did Chaucer himself mean, how did Chaucer himself feel, what experiences and memories were his when he wrote: —

" In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage." 2

" In Rome she hadde been and at Boloigne,
In Galice at Seint Jame and at Coloigne." 46

" Of Northfolk was this Reve of which I telle,
Biside a toun men clepen Baldeswelle." 62

What knowledge had Chaucer of these places tha made them to him more than mere names? Wa there no one that told of meeting him, hearing hi seeing him with friends sharing in some festivity no one that knew and told of the death of the pro Chaucer that had walked beside the verse Chaucer?

" Infinite been the sorwes and the teres
Of olde folk, and folk of tendre yeres,
In al the toun for deeth of this Theban.
For him ther wepeth bothe child and man." 22

THE POET

Poetry is a compound into which many elemen enter: emotions of all kinds and degrees; ideas gat ered and grouped and displayed by emotions; a vocal sounds endowed with attributes that expre these emotions and ideas, especially with the supre attribute of verse. These elements vary from po to poem, severally rising and sinking in prominen

from "poems without words" to "the perfect poetry of meaningless words." Many would add, as a fourth element, some visible notation of the voices or ideas or emotions. Of the poems of the past it is only this last element that remains; what was once of minor importance has become very important as our sole means of recovering all the rest. Philologists have enabled those who are no philologists to listen to a poem of Chaucer's if they will, and to revive the thoughts and feelings that were Chaucer's if they can.

Many of Chaucer's experiences resemble ours, and their revival requires no effort; there are indeed such among them as we would rather expel from our own minds than seek in his. But effort is required to comprehend the grand, even though false, ideas which Chaucer held in common with his contemporaries; and for all our endeavour we may never recall his fairest moments, those which were peculiarly his own.

The first step is to rid ourselves of the conceit of the twentieth century, which springs from having experiences Chaucer and his fellows could not have. Every one now has opportunities of knowing, feeling, acting in ways impossible for men of a past long subsequent to that of Chaucer. Deprived of all these, one would feel poor indeed; and yet how rich he remains. This wealth of his consists not merely in his own experiences of his own times, which we see re-

flected in his writings; not merely in his share o those vast structures of fancy, of faith, and of knowl edge which an after-time had cast as rubbish to th void; but in sentiments and perceptions which w have lost, but may recover, may be prompted to recove by Chaucer himself..

Chaucer died a century before America was di covered. The Eastern Hemisphere, as we term i stood on what was regarded as the top of the motio less globe of the Earth. On maps, which Chauc could have seen, the land was represented in a near circular form, with Jerusalem at the centre. N materials existed for anything like a science of geo raphy. It is now condensed in a compend for chi dren to read about in school. No foundation for suc a home of the mind had been laid by geologists, e plorers of America and Australia. No poet could th hear

> "The moanings of the homeless sea,
> The sound of streams that, swift or slow,
> Draw down Æonian hills, and sow
> The dust of continents to be."

To the geographer there appear in that part of t earth's surface known to Chaucer numberless counti duchies, principalities, kingdoms, or whatever else th might be named. These have since coalesced to gr states, but then they were struggling with one anoth

entering now into this combination, now into that, swearing allegiance to one overlord to-day and to another on the morrow. English power was limited to a portion of the British Isles and a few contested provinces in France. A Londoner could not go in any direction far from home without encountering enemies, or those who had just been or might soon be enemies. While still on English soil he would pass amid those to whom his speech and ways would be strange.

Chaucer's knowledge of the earth and of what was on it was gained from his own journeyings, from frequent meetings with other wayfarers, and from the writings of travellers. He had been in different parts of England, in the Low Countries, in France, and in Italy. He had met many, and "so had he spoken with hem everichon, that he was of hir felaweshipe anon." It was a time of goings to and fro, and it was not only the "good Wyf of biside Bathe" that "thryes hadde been at Jerusalem," and "coude muche of wandering by the weye." He had read such books as that encyclopædic work, the "Speculum Majus" of Vincent of Beauvais, of which Professor Lounsbury gives an entertaining account.

But what has geography to do with poetry? No poet would shock the geographic sense, for there is a geographic sense, scorned though it may be by those who have none. There are, too, in the range of its

knowledge places about which it loves to linger. Their very names, besides, are fragments of poems, and crave restitution to verse. You may not care to look beyond the name. You may doubt whether Milton had a very distinct vision of: —

> "*Mombaza and Quiloa and Melind*
> *And Sofala (thought Ophir), to the realm*
> *Of Congo and Angola farthest south,*
> *And thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount,*
> *The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,*
> *Morocco and Algiers and Tremisen.*"

You may know that Pope cared little for sites that were dear to some Greek singer: —

> "*Onchestus, Neptune's celebrated groves,*
> *Copæ and Thisbe, famed for silver doves;*
> *For flocks Erythræ, Glissa for the vine;*
> *Platea green, and Nysa the divine.*
> *And they whom Thebe's well-built walls enclose,*
> *Where Myde, Eutresis, Corone rose;*
> *And Arne rich, with purple harvests crowned;*
> *And Anthedon Bœotia's utmost bound.*"

We do not find in Chaucer sound without sense, and of all the places outside the regions of fancy and history that he mentions, he could have had a clear conception, — of Southwerk, Caunterbury, Baldeswell, Dertemouthe, and even of the places that some knight returning from the wars might describe; for

In Gernade at the seege eke hadde he be
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.
At Lyeys was he, and at Satalye,
Whan they were wonne. 59

And so we gain somehow the conviction that these names were not meaningless to him, however faint may be the impression which they make on our mind. His geography was not a science, for science is not made of ignorances or misconceptions, or even of knowledges that stand apart. It was not a book of places and names for which he cared nothing. It was the poet's selection of what interested him, and he supposed would interest others. But what is poetry to one need not be poetry to another, and what was poetry once may have ceased to be poetry, though it still bears the name, — ceased, that is, for us, — or not yet begun to be. Students who fancied themselves indifferent to poetry have shown eagerness about our poet's geography. This is one mystery of the poet's craft.

It was a century and a half after the death of Chaucer that the thoughts of Copernicus about the evolution of the heavenly bodies were made known to the world. The colours and lights of the skies, their blue expanses and manifold centres of brightness and warmth, are nearer to some of us than ever they were before; we may think of them as wrapped about us,

or of ourselves as immersed in them, or not of ou
selves at all, but of them only; and this we can d
because we are able to refrain, some of us, from in
agining machineries or agencies, spheres or spirit
associated somehow with the sights we feel. Th
Chaucer could not do, and Copernicus could not d
but we can understand that Chaucer put one interpr
tation on what his eyes beheld, and Copernicus p
another on what his eyes beheld; and yet what the ey
of both could see was probably as restricted as our ow
vision. Chaucer's deepest, firmest thought of the sta
the fixed or the wandering (and for him the sun a
moon are among the wandering stars, or planets),
may be reserved for others to discover. The "go
man of religioun," the "clerk that unto logik had
longe y-go," the "verray parfit, gentil knight" mig
hear Chaucer discourse of these matters as they stroll
by themselves over Kentish downs, while Reve a
Millere, Pardoner and Somnour, were otherwise occ
pied. Perhaps no conclusions seemed to him so go
that better might not lurk behind. He was a p
with an imagination, not a scientist with a theory
a philosopher with a system. What was the Sun
Chaucer? and could Saturn disturb his mind by bei
in this or that part of the zodiac? Of certain rules
astrology he says: "Natheles, thise ben observaun
of judicial matiere and rites of payens, in which

spirit ne hath no feith." But the age was pervaded by the belief that the astrologer knew just what was portended by each of the numerous configurations of the heavens; and it may well be that in rejecting this belief he still retained a sense of the reality of the unknown influence. At all events, he knows the doctrines of the astrologers, and often speaks their speech if he does not think their thought.

It is certain that Chaucer knew his universe, if not for astrological reasons, if not for the mere delight of knowing, yet for the purely practical purpose of being able to tell the time of day and the progress of the year. It is not the poet's perception of new aspects of things, it is not the versifier's need of an available stock of phrases that prompts him to say that "the yonge sonne had in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne," or that "the sonne is clomben up on hevene Fourty degrees and oon." This framework of the world was ever present to his consciousness. He could point at any instant to the place in which a planet was, as well when it was below the horizon as when it was above it, and tell what stars were around it as well in the daytime as in the night-time. If we should be deprived of what we know of the additions to astronomy since Chaucer died, would as much remain in our minds as Chaucer had? Chaucer not only saw the heavens with his eyes, but drew "conclusions" by the astro-

labe, and wrote a book to teach "litel Lewis," his son, by means of "so noble an instrument," "to knowe every time of the day by light of the sonne, and every time of the night by the starres fixe, and eke to knowe by night or by day the degree of any signe that assendeth on the Est Orisonte, which that is cleped communly the Assendent, or elles Oruscupum," and many more things besides.

The visible universe, that is to say, the cloudless sky that he might see by night or by day, would have sufficed for all his purposes. He could not be aware himself how little of what he had derived from the past of speculation about the stars was necessary for him. Destroy all telescopes and microscopes, all field-glasses and opera-glasses, and banish from our minds all that they have helped us to learn; do away with spectacles, which indeed were slowly coming into use in Chaucer's century; make glass itself a rarity and a luxury; and we have left a Chaucer who knew his heavens, who could shut his eyes and still behold the starry sphere as it whirled above and below him while he stood on the top of the steady earth there in London of England.

Adequate though this would have been to all the uses of life—this vision or conception or imagination or whatever else it has been called, Chaucer was no more capable than others of restricting himself to

The realm of space must not be left void. It had not been left void; but the imaginings of science so called had taught Chaucer that the planets he saw were but symbols of beings whose shape and nature were variously described, but which moved round the earth at different distances, the moon being the nearest and Saturn the remotest of the seven planets. But imagination did not stop here: it contrived mechanisms and powers for moving these and controlling them; concentric crystalline shells, in each of which a planet was set, enveloped in yet another shell in which the stars were embedded, while around them all was the *primum mobile*, the first to be moved by the power on which all things depended; or great wheels, each of which bore round a planet fixed to a point on its rim, or else carried a smaller wheel with the planet attached to the rim of the latter. Now what puzzles us in Chaucer's mind, as well as in the minds of those who taught him, is to know precisely how he regards all this machinery, whether it is as real to him as rock and trees and stream, or a mere image with no reality besides, a help, perhaps, to the thinking out of where a planet had been or was to be.

Is it strange that, when their planets were so different from ours, they supposed them to have the attribute which can hardly be ascribed to our planets, of foreshowing by their natures and positions the des-

tinies of men? Is it not strange that without knowing or having means of knowing a universe different from that of his contemporaries, he should, so early, have rejected beliefs that are still held by thousands in civilized lands? They know little of Chaucer as a poet even who have not tried to understand this part of his mind, and come to feel something of the love and wonder with which "litel Lewis" must have gazed up at him.

We may ask as we seek to explore the mind of Chaucer, what were his notions of stone and earth, of shrub and tree, of fish and fowl and beast. Not so unlike our own notions, perhaps, as our great systems, our mineralogy, botany, zoölogy, persuade us to believe. He had no occasion to be better instructed in these matters than the persons among whom he lived, to whom his poems were addressed, whose applause and favour he desired. Hardly more than a hundred names of plants and animals are found in all his works, mostly of common herbs and beasts. The body of a lion with the tail of a fish, the feathers of a bird, and a human head, that had its abode in a desert of Asia, and happened at the same time to be the emblem of magnanimity, if it were not of turpitude,— with these productions of feeble imagination Chaucer could not help being familiar; they abounded in the literature of his time. Any puddle can furnish strange

forms of life, which only need enlarging to become terrible. Every meadow is full of shapes of beauty and loveliness that no description contains. These things he had seen and remembered; but he seems sceptical and indifferent in many matters that he could not test personally. Memories and emotions, however, are not truths; and, in spite of the interval of time, the scientific student of natural objects finds less difference between the mind of Chaucer and the mind of Wordsworth than the latter's declared delight in nature makes us assume.

With what were deemed sciences at the time, the sciences of God, of heaven and hell, of the origin and destiny of the world, of the soul's choices in their limitations and consequences, he had a layman's acquaintance; at one time manifesting the incredulity of ignorance: —

His spirit chaunged hous, and wente ther
As I cam nevere; I can nat tellen wher. 2810

at another time gratifying himself and the audience of his day with disquisitions on Providence and Free Will, that bid the story wait meantime. There was not even among the readers of the Waverley Novels that dread of loitering by the way, of roaming far afield, that haunts our specialists in style and art; that repugnance to the irrelevant, the inconsequent,

which pervades a generation that models its play on its work, and makes "ernest of game," regulating its very sports by elaborate codes.

It is hard to fathom the mind of our poet, although it was no Chaucer who wrote: —

> Vex not thou the poet's mind
> With thy shallow wit;
> Vex not thou the poet's mind,
> For thou canst not fathom it.

The depths and shallows of Chaucer's mind have been sounded, and much has been found therein which does not concern us at present. The plots of his stories, the incidents, the characters, the structure and arrangement, have been traced to their sources. He has been proved to be indebted to others even for his errors. Quaint misrepresentations of history and chronology — a Trojan dame that reads a Latin poem, a Grecian hero presiding at a mediæval tournament — were all he could get from the books and minds around him. After all, the age pleased itself and knew what it was about better, perhaps, than we suppose, and listened to poem and sermon without thinking "How easily I could prove that mistaken if I only had my 'Dictionary of Dates.'" Yes, there were depths in Chaucer's mind, the abodes of mythologies, romance, religions, fairy tales, histories, tap-room stories; not a fading trifle of them all but suffered a soul change into

something English and Chaucerian. Glorious, enviable depths there were, too, of ignorance, — of unfeigned, modest ignorance. He could say of the Astrolabe, "Truste wel that alle the conclusions that han been founde, or elles possibly might han been founde in it, ben unknowe perfitly to any mortal man in this region as I suppose." And he represents himself as saying: —

> *'Hoste,' quod I, 'ne beth nat ivel apayd,*
> *For other tale certes can I noon*
> *But of a rime I lerned longe agoon.'* — B. 1899.

Of course, any profession may be called merely artistic or false; and where novelty and originality are no merit, whether in poems or furniture, there is no modesty in disclaiming them. Chaucer might like to be regarded as intimating to posterity the hopelessness of his love or the shrewishness of his wife, but the poet of the men of the fourteenth century would hardly relish the loud praises of his knowledge that contradicted his conviction of his own deep ignorance.

> *'Frend, what is thy name?*
> *Artow come hider to han fame?'*
> *'Nay, for-sothe, frend!' quod I;*
> *'I cam nought hider, graunt mercy!*
> *For no swich cause, by my heed!*
> *Suffiseth me, as I were deed,*
> *That no wight have my name in honde.*
> *I woot myself best how I stonde;*

For what I drye or what I thinke,
I wol myselven al hit drinke,
Certeyn, for the more part,
As ferforth as I can myn art.'
— *The House of Fame.* 188

Chaucer's Englishmen required "som mirthe or som doctrine." They had to reform the Church from within the Church, to protect the realm from invasion by carrying the war into the enemy's country, to check pestilence after pestilence, to quarrel toward a settlement of the conflicting claims of native and foreigner, of employer and employed, and, while only half aware, to make over their minds, their taste, and their language. Chaucer had some part in all these things, but particularly in the last. His way triumphed for the time, perhaps for all time. An earnest man could say: —

I can nat geste — rum, ram, ruf — by lettre,
Ne, God wot, rym holde I but litel bettre. I.

How many felt a difference or had a preference between: —

Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
And wonderly delivere and of greet strengthe.
* * * * * * * * *
Embrouded was he, as it were a mede,
Al ful of freshe floures, white and rede.
* * * * * * * * *
Short was his goune, with sleves long and wide,
Wel coude he sitte on hors, and faire ride.

and

Sir Thopas wex a doughty swayn,
Whyt was his face as payndemayn,
His lippes rede as rose;
His rode is lyk scarlet in grayn,
And I yow telle in good certayn,
He hadde a semely nose. B. 1918

Of Chaucer's contemporaries on English ground there were those who spoke in this wise: —

Perle plesaunte to princes paye,
To clanly clos in golde so clere,
Oute of orient I hardily saye
Ne proved I never her precios pere, —
So rounde, so reken in uche araye,
So smal, so smothe hir sides were, —
Queresoever I jugged gemmes gaye,
I sette hir sengely in singlure;
Allas! I leste hir in on erbere;
Thurgh gresse to grounde hit fro me yot;
I dewine for-dolkked of luf-daungere,
Of that privy perle withouten spot. — The Pearl.

Pearl! fair enow for princes' pleasance,
So deftly set in gold so pure, —
From orient lands, I durst avouch,
Ne'er saw I a gem its peer, —
So round, so comely-shaped withal,
So small, with sides so smooth, —
Wherever I judged of radiant gems,
I placed my pearl supreme.

I lost it — in an arbour — alas!
It passed from me through grass to earth.
I pine, despoiled of love's dominion, —
Of mine own, my spotless pearl.
— Gollancz's Translation.

Really the range of the language in which our poet spoke or sang was very limited indeed. Even within that range, among lawyers, churchmen, courtiers, scholars, you would hear Latin or Anglo-French, or French of some kind from over-sea. Chaucer himself saw his English displace French in the teaching of children and the guidance of clients in courts of justice, but teachers and lawyers by themselves went on using Latin or French as before.

But the language, the life of the nation, the book of science and history and romance, the sights of earth and sky, were common to many; what did Chaucer make of all these? The result is all that concerns us here, as we read the few verses that this book contains with some consciousness of the poet behind the poem. With the names of the earlier works one can familiarize himself elsewhere. He must seek elsewhere too, the accounts of their contents and origin, of the times and occasions of their production, — interesting and even necessary reading for those who cannot read the works themselves. He will learn there how Chaucer taught himself by practice the craft of the

poet. He will hear of his French period, his Italian period, of the long apprenticeship, the years of journey-work that made the master. He will find that a French poet hailed him as

Grant translateur, noble Geffroy Chaucier.

He will read what Lydgate wrote of him: —

This sayd poete, my maister, in his dayes
Made and composed ful many a fresh ditee,
Complaintes, balades, roundels, virelayes,
Ful delectable to heren and to see:
For which men shulde, of right and equitee,
Sith he of English in making was the beste,
Praye unto God to yeve his soule reste.

And as he goes on in his inquiries, he will hardly fail to read what Tyrwhitt wrote a century and a quarter ago: "The general plan of the Canterbury Tales may be learned in a great measure from the Prologue. . . . The characters of the Pilgrims are as various as, at that time, could be found in the several departments of middle life; that is in fact, as various as could, with any probability, be brought together so as to form one company, — the highest and the lowest ranks of society being necessarily excluded. It appears further that the design of Chaucer was not barely to recite the tales told by the pilgrims, but also to describe their journey, and all the remnant of their

pilgrimage, including probably their adventures at Canterbury as well as on the road. If we add that the Tales, besides being nicely adapted to the characters of their respective relaters, were intended to be connected together by suitable introductions and interspersed with diverting episodes, and that the greatest part of them was to have been executed in verse, we shall have a tolerable idea of the extent and difficulty of the whole undertaking; and, admiring as we must the vigour of that genius, which in an advanced age could begin so vast a work, we shall rather lament than be surprised that it has been left imperfect."

And yet, to take the tales as Chaucer meant they should be taken, even the modern reader needs no more information about their origin than Chaucer himself has given; but he is rarely satisfied merely with that. The Prologue, though it has been shown that Chaucer might have caught some of the traits from literature, appears to be the result of personal observation of English folk. The Knight's Tale is a free adaptation of the *Teseide* of Boccaccio, with some hints from the *Thebais* of Statius, and takes us to great cities, to courts and camps, such as Chaucer had seen, whatever their date and name. The Nun's Priest's Tale is an "animal story" which Chaucer had found in some fable, perhaps, of Marie de France, or more amply sketched in the French Romance of Reynard

the Fox. He has added to it stroke after stroke of fine detail, of coloured light and shade, that will rest after the reading on every farm-yard you shall see.

The poetry of Chaucer was said, recited, sung; it always implied the reader and the listener, both entertaining and both entertained. The scenes and ideas were already their common possession before a word was uttered, and a word was no sooner uttered than understood. Or the reciter would explain a strange word, making his explanation sometimes a part of the verse itself. He who wrote what a reciter should read to men of wealth or leisure knew that restful expletives must be introduced and dull expositions improvised by the reciter if they were not already in the poem. The poems were not written for us. We and our twentieth century are utterly unlike any experience or vision of Chaucer's; and it is precisely this fact, that he was of his own time, and not of a time before or after, that will endear him to Englishmen more and more as their world becomes more and more unlike his. The churches where he worshipped, the palaces he lived in, the tapestries he gazed on, and such armour as his fellows wore still remain we know not for how long. Chaucer's England still remains, imperishable in his verse. He knew no other, imagined no other, foresaw no other; and what a precious memory his verse preserves can be judged when an aged

philosopher of our day thus deplores the passing of the vestiges of Chaucer's England: —

"This overrunning of the old by the new strikes me afresh with every summer's sojourn in the country, and deepens my regret. . . . Though intensely modern and having but small respect for ancient ideas and institutions, I have great pleasure in contemplating the remains bequeathed by the times that are gone. Not that the interest is in any degree an historical one. A guide who begins his daily repeated series of facts or fictions about the ancient place he is showing me over, quickly has his story cut short. I do not care to be distracted by it from the impression of antiquity and from enjoyment of the half-hidden beauties of the old walls and arches made more picturesque by decay. And so it is with the old rural life that is rapidly passing away as towns and town-habits and town-ideas invade the country." — *Spencer's Facts and Comments.*

LIST OF CHAUCER'S WORKS

EXCERPTED FROM SKEAT'S LIST

Origenes upon the Maudeleyne (lost).
Book of the Leoun (lost).

Ceys and Alcion (first issue).
Romaunt of the Rose, lines 1–1705 (rest lost).
A. B. C.
369. Book of the Duchesse.
Lyf of Seynt Cecyle (first issue).
Monkes Tale (parts of; first issue).
372–3. Clerkes Tale (parts of; first issue).
Palamon and Arcite (first issue).
Compleint to his Lady.
An Amorous Compleint, made at Windsor.
Compleint unto Pite.
Anelida and Arcite.
The Tale of Melibeus (first issue).
The Persones Tale (first issue).
Of the Wretched Engendring of Mankinde (first issue).
Man of Lawes Tale (first issue).
377–81. Translation of Boethius.
379 ? Compleint of Mars.
379–83. Troilus and Creseyde.
Wordes to Adam.
The Former Age.
Fortune.
382. Parlement of Foules.
383–4. House of Fame.
385–6. Legend of Good Women.
386. Canterbury Tales begun.

1387–8. Central period of the Canterbury Tales.
1389, etc. The Tales continued.
1391. Treatise on the Astrolabe.
1393. Compleint of Venus.
1393. Lenvoy to Scogan.
1396. Lenvoy to Bukton.
1399. Envoy to Compleint to his Purse.

ORDER OF THE CANTERBURY TALES

The Prologue.
The Knightes Tale.
The Miller's Prologue
The Milleres Tale.
The Reeve's Prologue.
The Reves Tale.
The Cook's Prologue.
The Cokes Tale.
Introduction to the Man of Law's Prologue
Man of Law's Prologue.
The Tale of the Man of Lawe.
The Shipman's Prologue.
The Shipmannes Tale.
The Prioress's Prologue

The Prioresses Tale.
Prologue to Sir Thopas.
Sir Thopas.
Prologue to Melibeus.
The Tale of Melibeus.
The Monk's Prologue.
The Monkes Tale.
The Prologue of the Nonne Prestes Tale.
The Nonne Prestes Tale.
Epilogue to the Nonne Prestes Tale.
The Phisiciens Tale.
Words of the Host.
Prologue of the Pardoner's Tale.
The Pardoners Tale.
The Wife of Bath's Prologue.
The Tale of the Wyf of Bathe.
The Friar's Prologue.
The Freres Tale.
The Somnour's Prologue.
The Somnours Tale.
The Clerk's Prologue.
The Clerkes Tale.
The Merchant's Prologue.
The Marchantes Tale.
Epilogue to the Marchantes Tale.
The Squieres Tale.
Words of the Franklin.

The Franklin's Prologue.
The Frankeleyns Tale.
The Seconde Nonnes Tale.
The Canon's Yeoman's Prologue.
The Chanouns Yemannes Tale.
The Manciple's Prologue.
The Maunciples Tale.
The Parson's Prologue.
The Persones Tale.

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NOTES

1. **Whan that:** omit "that" in translating and slur it in eading. You may wonder how it came to be introduced, and ancy that it was merely to fill out the verse, since Chaucer imself dispenses with it in line 5. Here is one attempt at an xplanation: "That" goes with the following clause, "Aprille ath perced," and was prefixed from mere force of habit, beause it was so frequently used before clauses in other relations. nother account: "When" meant originally "At what time?" s combination with "that" meant "At that time" or "At hich time"; next, "At what time"; whereupon it was felt be possible to omit "that," since the tone of "when" had hanged, and there was no longer any likelihood of confounding with "when?" There were, however, many influences at ork, and each case requires particular examination, if one is ally interested in getting a true solution. Compare "while at," "if that," "though that," and "which that," "who at," and particularly the more intelligible "after that," ere that."

3. **swich . . . which:** this correspondence in sound and eaning has been lost, and we do not now say, "Swich they e which they have ever been," as a translation of "*Tales sunt ales semper fuerunt.*" In formal language "such" . . . which" is still used; but generally substitutes have come in,

often clumsy enough: — "in a liquor of such virtue as th flower is engendred by."

8. **the Ram**: in his yearly course from west to east in th sky, the sun crosses the line (equator) in March, and become "the yonge sonne." During the first half of April the sun trav erses the last half of Aries ("his halfe cours in the Ram") The ploughboy of Old England had the sun and stars for cloc and calendar. There was then in every one such a consciou ness and such a remembrance of the visible heavens over an under the motionless earth as he never has who merely reac statements of what astronomers infer from things which ploug boys can see. The study of Chaucer should prompt and help recover this lost vision — to see the sky as he saw it.

14. The punctuation is approved by Liddell; it separates th line from what precedes. For like separations, see lines 11 208, 388. "To ferne halwes" is contrasted with "to Caunte bury" by "specially." Emphasize the contrasted phrases reading.

17. **martir**: Thomas à Becket. This Archbishop of Cante bury was murdered at the altar in 1170. Henry II did penan at his tomb in 1174, though previously absolved from guil knowledge of the murde . The bones of Becket were e shrined in gold and jewels in 1220, but burned in the reign Henry VIII, 1539. In 1875 a Roman Catholic chapel to l memory was opened at Canterbury by Cardinal Manning.

19. **Bifel**: What befell? That nine and twenty came in that hostelry. "It befell" we use now; the "it" often mak the meaning plainer.

20. **Tabard**: when few could read, some picture, *i.e.* sig was needed to show what business was done within. " the Sign of the Glove, the Hat, etc., in the Street of Trin Church" served for our "At 217 Broadway." So taver

ere identified by some object suspended without; later by me representation of such an object on a board; and again by mere name, as "The Jug," "The Pair of Spurs."

22. **with ful devout corage**: there is no rule for telling here imagination leaves off and fact begins; until such a rule found, we may believe as much or as little as we please of hat Chaucer says of himself.

24. **nine and twenty**: this number is inconsistent with other arts of the poem; but the poem was never finished, and never tended for those who find more pleasure in detecting discrepncies than in reading the tales. Besides, it is a sonorous, erse-filling number; it coincides with the narrator's counting, which he would not naturally include himself. It is true ere were "fully" (wel) twenty-nine.

31. **So hadde I spoken**: the "I" in this line need not and for the author, but the actor; that is, the reader or citer of the poem amid a group of listeners, — a frequent ene when not many could read.

37. **Me thinketh**: "(to) me (it) seemeth," "it seems to e." The "to" was implied in the "me" and the "it" in e ending "-eth," and did not require the separate expression nich they came to need later.

41. **in . . . inne**: the instances of Multiple Indication are uch more frequent in verse than in prose, in earlier than in er compositions. The relation is expressed twice, and either n" might be dispensed with.

41. **that**: any group of words might be treated as a single ord, and might be replaced by a single word. Such a wordoup is sometimes changed (one might say inflected), or marked certain signs, on becoming part of a larger group. The vari- of usage may be illustrated by some distortions of English rases rather than by phrases from languages you may not

know. Let "he had come" form part of a larger group, an see how we might have spoken, in order to understand bett how we do speak: "I was astonished that he had come," "I the fact that he had come," "at that he had come," "at he ha come," "at his having come," "at him having come," "at h have come," "at him have come," "I was astonished he ha come," "him to have come," and many more. "That" w the most frequent group-prefix, and came to be used to indica incorporation or subordination, even when there were oth indications that might have sufficed.

42. "at a knight" is as plain to our comprehension as "w a knight." So above "to reste" is as intelligible as "at rest Such differences as these are but slight obstacles to the und standing of Chaucer. They may accordingly be of little imp tance to us now, but they are important to others in determin the date, the author, the birthplace of a manuscript; they a facts of language from which conclusions may be drawn, far-reaching for us to discuss now.

43. **worthy**: Chaucer impresses on us the "worthiness" his knight by the repetition of the word. "Worthiness" mea complete conformity to the ideal of chivalry.

45. **to riden out**, *i.e.* abroad to seek adventures, to gain sk in field and court, to acquire knowledge that would help othe Distinguish "out" in this line from "out" in line 166.

51-65. The map shows that all these places lie on the bound of "cristendom and hethenesse" as it was in the middle the fourteenth century. The scene of "his lordes werre" in France or Scotland. The duration of his distant campai ing was from 1344 to 1365. His son is twenty years of a The date of the pilgrimage is probably 1387. The knigh then some fifty years old, and his son was born to him a his return from foreign wars. The last of the crusades

ded dismally with the loss of Acre in 1291. The Teutonic
ights had sought new foes in Lithuania and Poland. The
ights hospitallers were sheltered in the island of Rhodes.
ne templars had been humbled and crushed and impoverished
Christian kings. When the real services of the knights as
ights were no longer needed under changed conditions, the
mp and pageantry of armorial suits, of parades and tourna-
ents, gathered new force, became established in the hearts and
aginations of the peoples, and reflected in all forms of art,
tably in *The Knight's Tale*.

66. **another hethen** than the one he fought against "in
amissene," not another than the "lord of Palatye," who
s a Christian.

68. The meaning is plain enough, but note that the words
hat" and "were" would not be used now.

74. There is a double indication of plurality here, — "were"
d "e" in "gode"; "hors" alone may be singular or plural.

80. **lovyere**: "luvyer" in comic ballads in dialect might be
pposed to be a mispronunciation of "lover." In origin and
nity Chaucer's word ranks with "lover," which he also uses.

80. **bacheler**: many words are liable to be misapprehended
the modern reader from the very familiarity of their aspect.

87. **litel space** may mean (1) narrow area, (2) brief time,
) limited opportunity. Perhaps (2) was alone present to
aucer's mind; but a poet need not change his phrase because
expresses more than he had at first intended, provided the
sociated meanings are not mutually contradictory, but each
d all suitable. The manifold implications of which the scien-
or the philosopher seeks to divest his terms are welcome to
word-artist.

'All the charm of all the muses often flowering in one lonely
rd." — TENNYSON.

88. **lady**, for "of a lady," came to be written "lady's," e cept in a few phrases, like "Lady-day," "lady-bird." Chauc is not dropping an "s" or taking any liberties with the la guage; he is simply adhering to the usage of his time.

91. **floytinge**: the usual meaning given to this word h been "playing on a flute," but Flügel, *Jour. of Germ. Phi* I, 2, 125, thinks it here means "whistling," but his reasons a less persuasive than the mere suggestion.

102. **him (it) pleased (to) ride so**: "it" and "to" ha not dropped out; Chaucer was not conscious of any omissio When one studies the English of any century preceding th of Chaucer, many features of Chaucer's language wear a d ferent aspect. If you have already studied Latin or French German, you will easily find parallels to Chaucer's constructio which you do not find in modern English.

120. **Seynte Loy**: St. Eligius. This saint once refused take an oath. Some think that this story was well enou known for Chaucer to believe that his phrase, besides its sim and obvious meaning, could also be surmised to mean that t prioresse did not swear at all.

121. **Madame Eglentine**: script falls so far short of spee that we can only guess the meanings that Chaucer's voice wo have given to this description of the prioresse. Would he h read this line as a mere statement, or have imitated the tone those who called her Madame?

"It is ful fair to been y-clept 'Madame.'" — Line 3

122–123. **entuned**: singing the divine service and entun (humming) it to guide the singing of another are two differ things. The prioresse could do both.

125. The Anglo-French of the Benedictine nunnery at St ford-at-Bow (then three hundred years old) was a good

uage. The prioresse spoke it with a somewhat old-fashioned recision, and deplored all divergences from her standard of orrectness. This amuses the travelled Chaucer.

127–136. **wel y-taught**: The nun's manners conform to the irections laid down in *Le Roman de la Rose*. She was probably ot acquainted with the book as Chaucer was.

131. **fille**: should fall.

144. **if that she sawe**: if she should see.

149. **men**: not the modern English *men*. See Glossary.

159. **peire**: not modern English *pair*. See Glossary.

173. **seynt Beneit**: St. Benedict (480–543) brought monasticism into Western Europe. St. Maur was his disciple. Their rule as already six hundred years old. "**The reule**," coming before by cause," goes with the nearest verb "was," like the Latin; ut unlike the Latin, "it" has to be introduced after "by ause." *Regula Sancti Benedicti quia vetus erat*. See lines 987–2988.

177. He thought nothing of this text, not the worth of a ucked hen. "Text" and "Scriptures" were used of other uthorities than the Bible. The second of these texts has been ound in writings of the fifth century.

183. Chaucer had talked with the monk, and assured him ith unsuspected irony that in his case the study and hand ork would hardly serve the world.

187. As St. Augustine (354–430) biddeth.

192. For no expense would he hold back.

194. The finest a land can produce.

210. The four orders are the Franciscans, the Dominicans e Carmelites, the Augustinians. There are many popular ames of each order, as Black, Gray Friars, etc.

212–213. This friar had violated his vow of chastity, and ade strange atonement to those whom he had wronged by

providing each with a husband and a marriage portion. Ar
yet he sought the company of wealthy and respectable men ar
women, and, displacing the curates, heard confession and ga
absolution in virtue of the license which he had from the Pop
He enriched himself and his order from fees and presents, a
thus violated his vow of poverty. He professes to believe th
the best way to gain favour of heaven is to give money to "t
povre freres."

232. **Men.** See line 149.

233. "It anciently formed part of the dress for women
wear a knife or knives sheathed and suspended from th
girdles." — BRAND'S *Popular Antiquities*, art. "Bride-knives

242. Better than he knew a leper or a beggar.

244. **as by his facultee**: in view of his abilities.

246–255. There was no punctuation in the manuscrip
Editors differ in punctuating. Punctuate these lines in
many different ways as seem to you allowable.

247. "**delen**" was once sufficient where "to delen" w
required later, the relational meaning of the "to" having
come very general and vague. Indeed, so obscured was
meaning that "to delen" was treated just as "delen" h
been, and "for to delen" took its place. "For" is now
used. Can we suppose that "to" will disappear also, and t
we shall say as of old, "it is no use wish know such things

249. **ther as**: I cannot explain briefly how "ther as" me
"where." It is not likely that Chaucer himself knew. It c
cerns us first to learn what Chaucer's phrases meant to h

254. **In principio**: the "limitour" introduces himself
every house with "*In principio erat verbum*," "In the be
ning was the word." The Latin, of course, inspired sim
souls with confidence in him. The first verse of the Gospe
St. John was in common use by the friars as an incantation

255. **ferthing** is not here a piece of money, a farthing, but ome trifle. Not that Chaucer was not equal to representing he friar as getting a coin from one who had not even a shoe.

266. **harping**: "in his harping" goes with "he hadde onge," when he had sung to his harp. Cf. line 173.

276. **kept for any thinge**: he would have the sea guarded t any cost that his goods might not be captured. It has taken nuch hard work to secure the present safety of the seas. Draw line on your map from Harwich at the mouth of the Orwell in Essex, England, to Middelburg in the island of Walcheren, and eflect on the perils of such a passage. Professor Hales discov-ered that for four years from 1384 the wool-staple was not at alais, but at Middelburg, and inferred that our merchant was naking his pilgrimage in one of those years.

278. **eschaunge**: what any one in commercial countries can o now as a matter of course, namely, exchange moneys (coins) t rates agreed on was then kept in the hands of officials. "Free-om was granted to merchants to exchange with one another as ong as they did not do it for gain, but only for mutual conven-nce." — CUNNINGHAM. Chaucer does not say that his mer-nant reaped any profit from his money changings, nor does he ay (l. 280) that he was in debt, that is, had borrowed any money o put in his business, and repay with interest. Imagine modern erchants forbidden to do this. Yet that is just what our mer-nant was forbidden to do. No wonder he was circumspect in s management (estatly of his governaunce). See this extract om an ordinance of 1363, quoted by Cunningham, "Whereas eretofore the City of London has sustained great mischiefs, scan-als, and damages by reason of certain persons who, neither for ar of God nor for shame of the world, cease, but rather do daily ert themselves to maintain the false and abominable contract usury (interest), under cover and colour of good and lawful

trading; which kind of contract, the more subtily to deceive th people, they call exchange or chevisance, whereas it might mor truly be called mescheaunce, seeing that it ruins the honour an soul of the agent, and sweeps away the goods and property o him who appears to be accommodated, and destroys all manne of right and lawful traffic."

293. **for (to) him (it) was levere (to) have,** etc.: he ha rather have, or he liked better to have.

297. **philosophre**: alchemists were also called philosopher but this philosopher was no alchemist.

318–320. **purchasour**: "Gower's verses explain the wo 'purchasour' in a different sense from that which has bee assumed hitherto (conveyancer); they show that the expre sion implies a buying up of landed estates which the lawye were able to effect by deceiving their clients, bringing the selves thus, to the detriment of the country, into the class the great landowners." — FLÜGEL, in *Anglia*, Vol. XXIV.

323. **hadde he cas**: he could cite accurately the cases a decisions that had been reported since William the Conquero

333. **complexioun** does not have here its modern meaning

337. **pleyn delyt**: he held the opinion that pleasure is t highest good.

340. **Seynt Julian**: St. Julian was invoked by travellers a pilgrims.

353. **table dormant**: irremovable tables had been recent introduced. Previously a board on wooden tresties had suffic

355. **sire**: at the meeting of the justices of the peace he h the highest position; was addressed as "lord" and "sire."

356. **knight of the shire**: representative in Parliament an English county, as Chaucer himself was of Kent in 1386.

363. **liveree**: livery, from meaning anything that was del ered at stated times to servants or retainers, came to be limit

whatever might be worn as a distinctive badge of an association, fraternity, or gild.

371. **wisdom that he can**: for the wisdom that he knows, as competent to be the head of a gild.

377. **al bifore**: before all others.

385. **greet harm**: it is a pity that he is so afflicted, but that oes not interfere with his making prime blancmanger; or it is pity that one should be so afflicted who can make such excellent blancmanger as he.

390. Sailors are not noted for skill in choosing or riding horses.

395. **good felawe**: "a jolly good fellow," not "a good fellow enough."

397. **Burdeux-ward**: framward and toward were sometimes written thus: to Burdeux ward, from Burdeux ward.

400. **sente hem hoom**: he kindly urged them to leap overboard, and swim in whatever direction their home might be.

402. **daungers him besides**: the dangers that encompassed him.

404. **Hulle to Cartage**: apparently the northern and the southern limits of his voyagings.

410. **Maudelayne**: the returns of the custom-house of Dartmouth are still preserved in the Record Office, and under date 1386 is found, "Navis. Magdaleyne. Peter Risshenden filed 21 Sept. Pro fabis value 13s. 4d."

413. **To speke of**, etc.: in medicine and surgery.

414. **astronomye**: the kind of astronomy he knew was the positions of the sun, moon, planets, and horizons to one another the date of an illness. From these facts he thought he could tell what to do as well as from the appearance of his patient. These aspects of the heavens change from hour to hour, and the treatment that would succeed under one aspect would fail under another. This knowledge of nature enabled him to rival

magic by keeping his patient in adjustment to the proper hours His images were made of wax, clay, etc., and could be treate instead of the patient. If this treatment did not succeed, it wa because the right moment had not been chosen. In the twenty four hours of the day each point of the sun-path comes up i the east in succession. The ascendent of the image was th point that rose just as it was being made or treated. The doc tour "fortuned this ascendent," *i.e.* made it lucky by waitin for the right one before he busied himself with his image.

420. **hoot . . . drye**: the theory of disease in the Middl Ages was itself a disease. Fire, water, earth, and air wer elements which had in varying degrees the qualities of hea cold, moisture, and dryness corresponding to the four "com plexions" or "humours" or "temperaments," melancholi phlegmatic, sanguine, choleric, and engendering diseases b their excess or defect in heart, lungs, etc.

429. **Esculapius**: myth, fable, and history were distinguishe differently by the Middle and by the Modern Age. It wa possible in the Middle Ages not only to believe that Æsculapi had lived, but to exhibit the work which he had written. Th doctour knew the principal text-books of the period, — som Classical, some from the early Middle Ages, some (the la three) of contemporary authorship. They are Greek, Ara Moorish, and English.

441. **esy of dispence**: slow to spend, though you might n have thought so from his rich attire.

442. The pestilences of the fourteenth century had increas the cost of living for the upper classes, but the doctour of ph sik did not mean to let that deprive him of his superior gai These pestilences had occurred in 1348–49–62–69–76.

443. **cordial**: for the reason that gold in medicine is a sov eign remedy — for just that reason, and no other, he loved gol

Gold had so many good qualities that it was held it would prove good medicine if it could only be rendered drinkable, *aurum potabile.*

447. **swiche an haunt**: spinning and weaving were once the work of households, of matron and daughter, of maid and man, either for home consumption or to exchange for other things.

449–452. Contributions were not taken up in the churches, but laid by the giver on the altar. The humbler sort waited till their betters had gone up. "The good Wyf" was angry if any one presumed to start before she did.

454. **ten pound**: they were large enough to weigh ten pounds, but Chaucer may exaggerate sometimes.

460. **chirche-dore**: the first part of the marriage ceremony was performed in the church porch. the couple thereupon advancing to the altar.

461. **compaignye in youthe**: not to mention previous visitors.

465–466. At Boulogne, to worship the image of the Virgin; in Galicia, at the shrine of Compostella, where the body of St. James reposed; at Cologne, where lay the bones of the Three Wise Men of the East.

475. **knew perchaunce**: she might counsel others from her experience.

486. **cursen for his tithes**: very painful would it be to him to excommunicate any one for not paying the tithes.

489. **substaunce**: from the contributions to him and from his own income.

495. **Upon . . . staf**: (going) upon his feet, and (holding) in his hand a staff. The words in parentheses are not needed for the sense, were not thought of by Chaucer or any one who heard him. Schools sometimes exact a fulness of statement that the living language knows nothing of. An expression may

be expanded to render the meaning precise or unmistakable, o
to restore its original form, or through inadvertence, but no
merely to enable it to be parsed, unless, indeed, parsing is
process by which an expression is made more intelligible to one'
self or another.

498. **gospel**: see Matt. v. 19; also v. 13 for what follows.

510. **chaunterye**: chantries had come to be looked on a
easy berths where there was nothing to do but chant mass for
dead man's soul at stated times.

511. **been withholde**: the "Persoun" is indirectly con
mended for not seeking the seclusion of a monastery as a releas
from his parish duties.

516. **despitous**: he did not manifest toward the sinful ma
anger or disdain or cold reserve.

526. **spiced conscience**: he was no Pharisee. A spice
conscience was too nice for common folk. In France the gif
or fees of suitors to judges, either before (Skeat) or aft
(Littré) the decision, were called spices (*espices*); but th
may not have been in Chaucer's mind in using the proverbi
expression.

529. **brother**: "was his brother" may be so spoken as
be equivalent to "who was his brother." There is really
need in speech of the double indication, but in print "who
clearer. Ploughmen in England now are farm laborers. Th
ploughman was a poor farmer (lessee of land), who probab
paid his rent, like his tithes, in work or kind.

534. Both in joy and woe.

540. He worked out his tithes, or paid them in kind; nothi
is said of money.

541. The ploughman was not a person of quality, and mig
not be disgraced by riding a mare.

548. A ram was the prize.

557–559. Chaucer appears to mention the characteristics of he "Miller" just as they occur to his mind. It was useless or the enumeration to follow a principle which few would dis- over who read, and none who merely heard.

561. "That" refers, of course, not to the jangler, but to his angling.

562. The American reader needs to be reminded that corn is ot maize.

563. **thombe of gold**: and yet he was an "uncommon" ood miller, had a thumb that could detect, after the wont of illers, the slightest variation in the fineness of the meal. But esides this meaning there is the suggestion of the proverb, every honest miller has a thumb of gold," which means there is no honest miller." Compare "the wise man's heart on his right side" and the following from Venn's *Symbolic ogic:* "There was an old saying at Croyland in the fens, — nen inaccessible to wheeled traffic, — that all the carts that ame there had the tires of their wheels of silver."

570. **took by taille**: gave his promise to pay, which was a otched stick (tally), scored with the price, and payable at the roper time when presented and proved to match a similarly otched stick.

581. **by his propre good**: to make him keep within his come.

586. **hir aller**: of them all. "To set one's cap" is "to neat him."

594. **on him winne**: could get the better of him.

604. **ne knew his sleighte**: whose trickery and deceit he d not know. "That . . . his" for "whose" is not uncom- on now in conversation.

605. **deeth**: the pestilence.

611. He grew rich at his lord's expense, and yet got the

thanks of the latter and gifts besides for lending him what wa
really his own money.

621. **Tukked . . . aboute:** his loose surcoat was gathere
about the waist by the girdle.

624. **cherubinnes face:** cherubs were painted red in earl
art. Cherubin is used as singular, though it is modified fro
cherubim, which is the Hebrew plural, though used in Englis
as singular.

644. **thing him grope:** "thing" is either singular or plur
in Chaucer. Translate "in any other point."

646. **Questio quid juris:** the question is, what is the law i
this matter.

652. **finch:** "to pull a finch," like "to pluck a pigeon," "
shear a lamb," etc., means to gain something from a weak
simple person which he would not yield if he had strengt
or sense.

655–656. **Erchedeknes curs:** the archdeacon may curse yo
soul, but he is thinking of your purse; he may threaten y
with the pains of hell, but he will punish you only in yo
purse; he may denounce such things as you are doing, b
have no awe of him, go on; you can buy him off. So wou
the "summoner" describe the archdeacon to the "goo
felawe." But Chaucer professes to know that the "somnour
lied, and that the curse of the archdeacon could keep the so
from bliss, so that a guilty man ought to dread it, and partic
larly to beware of exposing himself to a writ of excommunic
tion. This was called a "significavit" from the word it beg
with. Some modern readers may suspect Chaucer of indiff
ence to the curse of a prelate, and imagine that he sees t
irony of this repudiation of the somnour's slanders. W
knows what Chaucer really thought? It was one thing to s
the corruption, the inconsistencies, and absurdities of the churc

and to set these forth in an English that commanded attention; it was quite another thing to doubt at that time the doctrines of the church as men afterward doubted and rejected them.

663–664. **daunger**: "daunger" does not mean "danger," nor does "girles" mean "girls." It was a terrible thing, if it was true, that such a man had brought under his control the young people in the diocese by his authority to summon for alleged violation of ecclesiastical laws — laws that sought to regulate all the most intimate, private, and personal relations of life.

669. **Pardoner**: that there is no exaggeration in this sketch of a pardoner Jusserand has shown by utterances of contemporary popes and bishops. It appears that there were genuine pardoners duly licensed to remit penances on certain specified conditions, and to account for any money thus acquired to the church. But false pardoners sprang up everywhere who forged bulls and licenses and relics, claimed power to remit sins, excluded sometimes priests and vicars from their own churches, or brought charges against them, and had them suspended from their functions, and spent the money they won in the gratification of their own desires. They were suppressed by a decree of the Council of Trent in 1562.

685. **vernicle**: this vernicle was a copy of the napkin of St. Veronica preserved at Rome, on which the image of Christ had been miraculously impressed. See Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art*.

695. **our lady veyl**: the veil of the Virgin Mary. Lady was used where lady's is now. It still is used in lady-bird, lady-bug, lady-day. Not so very long before Chaucer's time they wrote hlaefdigan"; in Chaucer's time, "lady"; soon afterward, ladys," and now "lady's." See line 88.

702. **upon lond**: in the country.

703. **Upon a day**: in one day.

706. **apes**: he made the parson and people what they di not want to be, and did not know that they were, and als made them contribute to his amusement or profit. Why n say at once, "he made them his dupes"? Because I woul suggest the scene from which this phrase might have originate the showman's dancing apes in a village green. I do not say "d originate," since the origin of an expression like this is from i nature obscure.

710. **alderbest**, from "ealra betst," "best of all."

715. **in a clause**: elsewhere, "shortly in a clause," an "in a litel clause," all meaning "briefly."

716. **Thestat**: "the estate," "th' estate," and "thestate would differ little in pronunciation, and hardly affect th verse. In line 708 we might write "noble ecclesiaste," "nob ecclesiaste," "nobl ecclesiaste," or "noblecclesiaste," witho meaning to suggest differences of pronunciation, or that ver in this respect was read differently from prose.

720. **yow for to telle**: but now it is time to tell you. translating into modern idiomatic English, note (1) insertio or omissions of words or letters, (2) changes of word or phra (3) change of order. Do not do this at the time of translatio think then of the meaning only; but later, when you ha finished writing the translation. You need to read some midd English prose to feel the differences between the word-orders prose and verse.

733. **Everich a**: "the words every one," "every sin word." The older form "ān" became in some word-sequen "a"; in others, "one." Where there was no spelling, or wh the spelling changed with the sound, and even now with stationary spelling, a change of sense tends to be accompanied change of sound.

733. **in his charge**: in his assumed task.

736. "**thing**" is plural, and means "things."

738. He must say one word as much as another.

741. **Plato**: Chaucer knew no Greek, and quotes Plato at second hand. He found the sentence in the Latin of Boethius, and translated it, "Thou hast lerned by the sentence of Plato that nedes the wordes moten be cosines to the thinges of which they speken."

744. **Al have I nat**: although I have not.

751. **our hoste was**: Chaucer varies his phrases, but not so that a listener would notice it. You who are reading can turn back to "A Knight there was," "With him ther was his sone," etc., and compare these formulas of introduction with the introduction of the hoste.

760. **rekeninges**: made up our accounts, paid our scores.

769. "**God yow spede**" still survives in "God speed you," for which the modern English often uses the later form, 'may God speed you." There are similar survivals in "God grant," "God bless," etc., but we should hardly say, "the blissful martyr give you your reward" without prefixing 'may."

772. **pleye**: Chaucer had often his choice among six forms where we are restricted to one, — "pleye," "pleyen," "to pleye," "to pleyen," "for to pleye," "for to pleyen." Note also that "pleye" is a dissyllable before a consonant, or at the end of a breath-group, and that "to talen" cannot be replaced by "to tale" in this line. Such a light final syllable is said to be missed by the makers of English verse to-day.

777. **yow liketh alle**: if it pleases you all. Chaucer said, if me liketh," or "if it me liketh," but not "if I like."

781. **fader soule**: for "father's" Chaucer has not only "fader" as here, but also "fadres" and "faders."

783. **hond**: sing., because one hand of each is meant

"Hold up your honds" might have suggested to Chaucer that each was to hold up both hands.

785. **Us thoughte**: of the forms, Me thought, Thee thought, Him thought, etc., only the first is now used at all. "We thought it was not worth while to deliberate upon it." We do not express the thought as briefly and yet as simply and plainly as Chaucer did.

788. **for the beste**: as well as you can, as best you can.

791. **shorte with**: to shorten our way with.

799. **our aller**: of us all.

810. **othes swore**: "we" is implied, and need not be expressed in this and the next line; later, as with us, the insertion of "we" at least once (with the first verb) became the rule.

817. **heigh and lowe**: in great matters and in small.

826. **Watering**: a watering-place for horses at the second milestone on the road to the shrine of St. Thomas.

829. **woot**: Chaucer has "ye witen," "ye wite," and "ye woot." The last had once been confined to the singular. Here he obliterates a distinction; he retains the distinction between singular and plural forms in many cases where we have dropped it altogether. Thus, "he rad," "they riden," are respectively he rode, they rode. This double indication, or rather triple indication of plurality, had ceased to be necessary for the sense.

830. This line stands out for sound and sentiment among the host's utterances, and seems to be an appropriate quotation which should be rendered with due solemnity, as it recalls to each what he had sworn to amid the festivities of the evening. If I tell the best stories, I shall have a supper without cost to myself; if I do not, I shall pay for my own supper and a trifle more; but if I refuse to abide by the judgment of the host, I shall pay all the expenses of the journey!

833–834. Compare for variation in expression lines 805–806.

839. **Cometh** is plural in form, but singular in meaning.

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

859. **olde stories**: this tale is derived mainly from the *Teseide* of Boccaccio (1315–75 A.D.) with some hints from the *Thebais* of Statius (61–96 A.D.).

860. **duk . . . Theseus**: Chaucer pictured to himself the past in the likeness of his own experience.

864. **contree**: the French accent to-day "contrée" on the last syllable; the English, "country" on the first. The accent of this and of many other Anglo-French words, like "prestige" even now, was not fixed in Chaucer's time, and he could justifiably use the accentuation which the verse required. In reading the verse your ear must be your guide.

866. **Femenye**: the kingdom of the Amazons.

885. **as now** differs somewhat from "now," not "at the present time," but "in view of the present circumstances."

925. **Thanked be**: this is all owing to fortune, etc.

926. That does not insure that any estate shall be happy.

933. **starf**: sterven (1) to die, (2) to die of hunger or cold, (3) to die of hunger. (1) is the old use, (2) is common in England, (3) is the only use known to many Americans.

936. **losten alle**: we all lost, etc. Make a slight pause after 'alle."

943–944. Connect "of alle oure lordes" with "the bodies" of the line following, not the line preceding. If these questions interest you, you might find instances to justify the joining of 'alle oure lordes" with "bodies" of the preceding line. Such would be instances: (1) where other words immediately precede "of"; (2) where a verse ending comes between.

957–958. **hente, conforteth**: the change of tense (hente, conforteth) may have no meaning, though it is not difficult to

assign several. "While lifting them, one after the other, he keeps consoling them." See a similar change in line 966.

977. **feeldes**: this needs no explanation to any one who knows how a bit of color will brighten up a room. The whole landscape would fade if that banner should be furled.

984. **thoughte fighte**: where he thought to fight.

1007. **diden bisinesse**: were busily engaged. We use "to do business" in a very different sense, and we do not use "to do cure" at all.

1017. **best in special**: especially well, with no manner of doubt.

1031. "Liveth" from line 1028 is felt in this line with "Palamon and Arcite." "In joye and in honour" is contrasted with "in angwish and in wo."

1038. **rose colour**: this is not rose-color, but rose's color. Rose is genitive, see line 88. This simple and beautiful line is transformed by a modern translator to "her complexion contested the superiority with the rose's color." If we could only learn from Chaucer how to talk plain English!

1045. **observaunce**: it is usual to quote in explanation of this phrase the accounts of the way in which this "observaunce" was done by throngs of peasants, and anciently of nobles spending the night before in pastimes in the woods, and returning at dawn with flowers and branches to adorn their homes; but all that is widely different from the tender observance of May the "parfit, gentil Knight" tells of.

1047. **rise**: I have already called your attention to the variety of forms Chaucer had at his disposal; note here how freely he combines them, as in "to doon and for to rise."

1048: **for to devise**: to give you a description.

1051: **at the sonne upriste**: at the sun's uprising, at sunrise. "Sonne" is genitive.

1052: **her liste**: as (it to) her pleased.

1059: Such lines as this give an air of truth to the situation the knight is talking while he rides amid the listening pilgrims. If you do not bear this in mind, they may appear as blemishes.

1061. **hir pleyinge**: her "pleyinge" was in walking up and down, gathering flowers, weaving a garland, and singing. It is better to think of these things than to substitute some modern phrase for "hadde hir pleyinge," but perhaps you may find a suitable translation.

1087. **disposicioun**: Saturn, we are told, means harm, and the constellation here unnamed might mean worse harm; but the really "wicked" thing is the aspect or disposition of the two, that is, the angle between the two lines that join the observer to each.

1094. **veyn imaginacioun**: in this opinion you are utterly mistaken.

1097. **that**: we would say, "I received a hurt that will be my bane." Our "that" recalls certain words; Chaucer's "that" recalls the thought, no matter how expressed.

1105. **Yow . . . to transfigure**: to transfigure yourself. Note the change from "thy" in the line before.

1121. **atte leste weye**: at least.

1125. **Whether**: "Does he laugh or cry?" was formerly "Whether laughs he or cries he?" We have lost this use of "whether," but retain a similar use in "they ask me whether he laughs or cries."

1127. **me list ful evele pleye**: I am little inclined to jest. To me (it) pleases not at all (to) play. Jesting would be a bad pleasure enough. Note how brief and simple Chaucer's phrase is, and how "bad," "sad," "evil," etc., come to mean "not."

1132. **Y-sworn**: sworn brothers, *fratres jurati*, *frères*

d'armes, became such by a pledge, usually accompanied by some ceremony, not without superstition.

1133. **peyne**: each had sworn rather to die as by torture than to hinder the other in love.

1133–1135. We say, "they swore not to hinder" and "they swore that they would not hinder." Chaucer says here, "they swore that . . . not to hinder." Some call this a blending of two constructions; others, a change of construction caused by the long interval between "that" and "hinder"; but some feel the last to be as rational and natural as either of the others. Consider, "I promise this: I will not hinder him," and "I promise this: not to hinder him," and then change in each "this" to "that."

1142. **been aboute**: "What is he about?" To this question, "He is about to love," would be a jesting answer now, but not then. It meant, "He is taken up with loving."

1153. **Thou shalt**, etc.: "You are likely to be proved false rather than I"; and then Arcite rushes to the conclusion "Nay, you are false, I tell you, utterly false."

1155. **par amour**: with the love of man for woman.

1164. **That**: do you not know the saying of the old writer (Boethius), that none shall give a lover any law? Now change the last clause into, "Who shall give a lover any law?" which, as implying the answer no, has the same meaning as the assertion, and you see how Chaucer can use "that" before questions as well as before statements.

1167. **decree**: laws and decrees made by men.

1168. **in ech degree**: in every class.

1171. **she**: the loved woman.

1198–1200. **olde bokes seyn**: this incident seems to have been suggested to Chaucer by a passage in *The Romance of the Rose*. The friendship of the mythical heroes Theseus and Pi-

thous was famous in antiquity, and the legends about them were distorted and amplified in the Middle Ages.

1201. **nat to write**: this "write" is an oversight of Chaucer's; he forgot that the knight was telling the story.

1222. **To sleen himself . . . prively**: to slay himself unobserved.

1225. **me shape**: now (it) is (to) me appointed.

1247. **creature**: "creature" is any created thing living or without life. All things were supposed to be made of four elements, and these, curiously enough, were fire, water, earth, air, not one of which is included among the eighty or more elements of the modern chemist.

1259. **matere**: in this matter of thinking that we know better than God's providence.

1261. **mous**: "drunk as a mouse," "drunk as a rat," "blind as a mole," "silly as a goose," "dead as a door nail," are phrases of a type that the taste of some moderns rejects. They are often used with no thought of the thing named in them — mere phrases that have come down to us from a remote past.

1279. **shines grete**: the very fetters on his great shins were wet with his bitter, salt tears. We might regard the mention of his shins and the incidental suggestion of their size as irrelevant; but then many a person has read all that precedes this passage without having any representation in his mind of Palamon and his surroundings. He will try after this to see things as Chaucer meant they should be seen.

1283. **at thy large**: at large, unrestrained.

1284. **yevest litel charge of**: care little for.

1287. **sharpe**: to make a sharp war. We have lost this way of speaking. Who will try to turn a few sentences of his own into Chaucer's English?

1301–1302. **lyk was to biholde**: he was like the box tree or dead and cold ashes to look on.

1307. **holde**: what more is mankind considered by you?

1317. **to letten of his wille**: to control his desires.

1343. **to ben deed**: to die.

1344. **upon his heed**: to lose his head if he returned.

1374–1376. **lyk manye**: one point of difference between the fourteenth and the twentieth century which this passage illustrates seems worth mentioning. Mania was less withdrawn from the public gaze, and many might know how it looked; but the learned even could give no better explanation in the lack of anatomy, and physiology, and chemistry. In the knowledge of what can be perceived and easily verified the were perhaps better off than we; but in matters that can be known only by inferences tested by other inferences we have made great gains. None could prove the fanciful explanation that mania was caused by the melancholic humor in one of the three cells of the brain, — the seat of imagination.

1385. **Him thoughte**: the dream was an artistic device, a literary form indeed; but this was only because it had previously been, and for that matter was still, considered of importance in the actual affairs of life.

1389. **took keep**: as he (Arcite) noticed.

1390. **took his sleep**: slept. Chaucer seems to think phrases not words, and as little to avoid the repetition of the same word in different phrases as of the same syllable in different words.

1402. It came suddenly (to) him (that is) in (to) his mind.

1416. **what so men wol devise**: whatever one thinks for him to do.

1419. **The which that**: who.

1420. **aspye**: he had been able to discover in respect

every servant which one served her. Compare "To knowe with which degree of the zodiac that the mone ariseth." — ASTROLABE, and "That litel wiste how ny that was his care." — Line 1489.

1431. **gentil of condicioun**: refined in manner.

1448. **hath derre**: "holds dearer," but our idiom requires "held dearer."

1453. Worn out what with woe and (what) with distress.

1460. **am not I**: "It is not I," or "I am not the one."

1466. **shal be**: this line serves to explain the meaning of "destinee."

1489. **ny that**: omit "that" in translating.

1490. **in the snare**: you must have noticed before this that "in" frequently equals "into."

1491. **messager of day**: "the herald of the morn." — SHAKESPEARE.

1494. This line resembles one of Dante's, but the setting is very different.

> "The beauteous planet, that to love incites,
> Was making all the orient to laugh,
> Veiling the Fishes that were in her escort."
> — *Purg.* I, 20, LONGFELLOW'S Translation.

1495. "Stremes" may be translated "beams" or "rays," but it does not mean "beams" or "rays." Each suggests a different aspect of one thing; but, after all, no phrases can match the light itself, and the poet himself may have felt joy of the morn that we can know nothing of.

1501. **his desyr**: his mind on the object of his desire.

1504. **were it**: it might be.

1509. **ageyn the sonne shene**: turned toward the bright sun.

1521. **many yeres**: many years ago (many years being gone since).

1522, 1524. These lines have been shown by their occurrence elsewhere to have been common proverbs.

1534–1539. Friday means by derivation the day of love, as the equivalent French *vendredi* (*veneris dies*) also does. It is seldom like all the rest of the week, being either fairer or fouler.

1566. The expression seems homely, and the thought is common in fact and in fiction that death is certain, and that death has been appointed by a power able to enforce its decrees. But homely expressions and obvious truths are closely linked with grand aspects of life and imagination. In the past, spinning and weaving were nearer to all households, both rich and poor, than to-day.

> "Some winter night, shut snugly in
> Beside the fagot in the hall,
> Methinks I see you sit and spin,
> Surrounded by your maidens all." — RONSARD.

The minds of men were once fuller of images of belief or fancy, majestic beings in some remote unknown shaping at the loom of time the destinies of men.

> "O fatal sustren, which, er any clooth
> Me shapen was, my destine me sponne."
> — CHAUCER'S *Troilus*.

1589. She shall be loved by me alone, and by no one else.

1603. Without encountering death at my hand.

1614. **chees**: is this "I wol chees" or "chees thou"?

1622. **to borwe**: in pledge.

1623. **out of alle**: without any, utterly devoid of.

1625. **sooth is seyd**: this introduces a quotation which Professor Skeat has traced to Jean de Meung and to Ovid.

> "Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
> Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne."
> — POPE'S *Prologue to the Satires*.

1626. **his thankes**: of his own free will.

1642, 1643. And (the leoun) breketh . . . and (the hunter) thinketh.

1648. **knewe**: when near enough to recognize each other.

1650. **rehersing**: without any new word or repetition of their former words.

1660. Who could help supposing that so fierce a struggle would soon end in the death of both?

1665. (Destiny executes) the things which God has foreseen. The foreseeing is expressed twice in the line.

1673. This I think of in connection with Theseus. Theseus reminds me of this.

1697. **Under the sonne**: I had surmised that this might mean "he had the sun in his favor," "could see without being seen," "had the sun at his back"; but others interpret, "into the east," so that the combatants appeared between him and the sun. Other meanings have been suggested, and yet "to look under the sun" seems to have been written without suspicion that any could fail to understand it. Liddell links "under the sonne" with the line before.

1707. **up peyne of**: on pain of.

1713. **a listes**: listes is plural in form, but here singular in construction.

1715. The meaning is plain; the construction may be suggested by, How needs (it) more words?

1736. We say, "It is I that love." Notice that the construction was once, "It am I that loves."

1755. **And** (they) **sawe**.

1761. Apparently a proverbial saying, and, like *noblesse oblige*, used to exhort or command. "If you are noble-born (gentil), you should show pity," or "You have shown pity, you must be noble-born." The line is found in Chaucer four times.

1780. **can**: knows.

1781. **after oon**: alike, by the same rule.

1785. **benedicite**: pronounced béndiste even here, if the A is emphasized and prolonged.

1799. What fool like a lover?

> "To be wise and eek in love
> Is granted scarce to gods above."

It might mean, "Who is permitted to be a fool if a lover is not?" that is, "In a lover all follies must be overlooked."

1808. Knows as much her obligation to them as to me. "Thank" is used here as in "What thank have ye?"

1814. **was I oon**: I was "number one," was first in the service of love.

1827. **of lordshipe and of mercy preyde**: prayed him "to be their lord, and to be merciful."

1829. **To speke of**: in respect of.

1837–1838. That one of you, whether he likes it or not, must find something better to do than seek her hand; whistling in an ivy leaf would be even more useful.

1850. **fer ne ner**: (neither) farther nor nearer, neither more nor less.

1852. **at alle rightes**: in all respects.

1905. **Doon make**: caused (people) to make.

1913. **don wrought**: caused (to be) wrought.

1920. "Broken sleep" and "cold sighs" may be represented in painting, indirectly, by the aspects of the persons who wake and sigh.

1925 ff. These are usually spoken of as abstract qualities personified. They are such for us; they were perhaps for Chaucer. They were not so to begin with. Before hope was an abstract quality it was a person, a being, that possessed each perso

that hoped, and had those looks and ways that characterize hopeful persons. Hope was the composite picture, as it were, generated in the mind by the sight of many hopeful persons, or rather the reality which it was believed that picture in the mind necessarily implied. This reality could be described and painted, and continued to be described and painted, long after it had faded from the minds of men, and had ceased to be believed in, — so entirely forgotten, indeed, has it become that many are unable to recall it. Realism, mysticism, superstitions, arts, the gender-forms of language, had their origins in such mental growths as these. This is a hard saying, and is out of place here, if it does not make you see these beings which earlier men saw and dreamed of, and believed they might some day meet face to face.

1934. **By ordre**: in order.

1941. **of yore agon**: (of) years ago.

1954. **And though**: "and yet" gives the meaning, as does "even though"; but the earlier meaning of "and though" is better seen in "if (and, an) I could reckon a thousand, yet (though) one or two would suffice."

1961. **wel smellinge**: remember that this is a picture. See line 1938.

"Why, mark!
Even when I told the play and got the praise,
There spoke up a brisk little somebody,
Critic and whippersnapper, in a rage
To set things right: 'The girl departs from truth!
Pretends she saw what was not to be seen,
Making the mask of the actor move, forsooth!
"Then a fear flitted o'er the wife's white face,"
"Then frowned the father," "then the husband shook,"
"Then from the festal forehead slipped each spray,
"And the heroic mouth's gay grace was gone;"
As she had seen each naked fleshly face,

And not the merely painted mask it wore!'
Well, is the explanation difficult?
What's poetry except a power that makes?
And, speaking to one sense, inspires the rest,
Pressing them all into its service; so
That who sees painting, seems to hear as well
The speech that's proper for the painted mouth;
And who hears music, feels his solitude
Peopled at once — for how count heart beats plain
Unless a company with hearts which beat,
Come close to the musician seen or no?
And who receives true verse at eye or ear,
Takes in (with verse) time, place, and person, too,
So, links each sense on to its sister-sense,
Grace-like: and what if but one sense of three
Front you at once? The sidelong pair conceive
Through faintest touch of finest finger-tips, —
Hear, see, and feel in faith's simplicity,
Alike, what one was sole recipient of:
Who hears the poem, therefore, sees the play."
— BROWNING'S *Balaustion's Adventure.*

1977. If the sound of a line ever echoes the sense, this line w felt by Chaucer to be in keeping with the scene. In the mode pronunciation it has no longer any special appropriateness.

1987. Chaucer is not describing what he had seen, nor wh he had invented or discovered in the revelations of his ow imagination; he is reproducing what he had read in Statius, not translating with the book before him. As some think, he even mistranslating, and "northern light" results from t misapprehension of *adversum Phœbi jubar*, "the beam of a verse Phœbus." Still it may mean here to Chaucer the Auro Borealis. Meteoric and celestial phenomena were not much d tinguished from each other, and sunsets, auroras, moonshi

and starlight were all attributed to the sun and confounded together, so that the infrequent mention or description of the aurora by mediæval writers need not make us suppose that Chaucer was not thinking of it, although it was not then disentangled from other facts and given a name as now.

1997–1998. "The cruel Ire" and "the pale Dread" would be now "cruel Ire" and "pale Dread." Anger and dread are as real as pikepurs. They might not be found together in modern works. Persons and qualities seem to us such different things.

2005–2008. The first two lines describe the suicide, with throat cut, perhaps; the last two, the victim of a murder, like that of Sisera by Jael. (Judges iv. 17–22.) Pause somewhat after "heer" in reading.

2017. **hoppesteres**: dancing on the wave, implying that the ships were burned at sea, so that none could escape. The question is what Chaucer intended the word to mean, though there is little doubt that he read or thought he read *ballatrici* (dancing) in Boccaccio, where we find *le navi bellatrici* (fighting).

2021. **Marte**: Mars was the name of the war-god and of a planet. To the influence of this planet or of its position our ancestors ascribed many lesser woes than are recounted here. Cooks, carters, barbers, butchers, smiths — none so lowly as to be forgotten by the "infortune of Marte."

2029. **over his heed**: "a tyraunt that was king of Sisile that had assayed the peril of his estat, shewede by similitude the dredes of reaumes by gastnesse of a swerd that heng over the heved of his familier." — BOETHIUS, *Chaucer's Translation*. The story of the sword of Damocles.

2035. **hir deeth . . . by manasinge of Mars**: this was "depeynted ther-biforn by figure," that is, by some symbol or picture.

2039. Perhaps the "oon ensample" is this very story itself of Palamon and Arcite.

2045. In geomancy (earth-divination) sixteen figures could be made by rule with dots on the ground. One of these was called Puella; another, Rubeus. The former implied the planet Venus; the latter, Mars. Professor Skeat explained the matter in *The Academy*, March 2, 1889.

2059. **lode-sterre**: Callisto was not made the lodestar, at least according to the accounts we have in Ovid of these transformations.

2103. **of hir hond**: in respect of skill and strength.

2125. There is nothing that we have now that they did not have as well.

2141–2142. **nayles**: a bearskin with yellow claws.

2160. **cloth of Tars**: a kind of silk.

2187. **alle and some**: collectively and individually, one and all.

2217. **hir houre**: the one hundred and sixty-eight hours in the week from sunrise on Sunday are divided into twenty-four groups of seven hours each. Sol takes the first hour of each group; Venus, the second; Mercury, the third; Luna (Diana) the fourth; Saturn, the fifth; Jupiter, the sixth; Mars, the seventh. This gives the second hour before sunrise on Monday to Venus; the first hour after sunrise to Diana; the fourth hour to Mars. Whoever wanted the good-will of a planet must choose the right hour for every act that concerned that planet.

2238. **I kepe nought of armes for to yelpe**: *i.e.* care rather for your favor than for glory.

2241. **blowen** goes with "prys." Cf. Tennyson's —

> "As if the wind
> Blew his own praises in his eyes."

The three specifications that follow "axe not" are distinct from one another, which is not always the case in Chaucer.

2245–2246. **recche nat**: I do not care whether I have victory over them or they over me, except in so far as either may be better for my purpose, namely, that of having my lady.

2271. **The thridde houre inequal** (from the time) **that Palamon**, etc.: the hours we use are of equal length; the hours assigned to the planets were each the twelfth part of the day-time or the night-time, and varied as these varied.

2273. I doubt whether Chaucer was thinking of any other likeness here than that of time; but if he was making a comparison, it was with the beautiful sun he was wont to see, and not with the one we read about in astronomy books. Chaucer lived before the sun went ninety million miles away, and became eight hundred thousand miles in diameter. Such changes of conception make many passages in Chaucer humorous to the modern reader, which is unfortunate.

2281. It looks as if Boccaccio's *fu mundo* (was clean) had suggested to Chaucer *fumando* (smoking), and led him to envelop his Emily in clouds of incense, and to surround her with tapestries and hangings of drapery.

2286. **game**: pleasure.

2287. He that means well would find nothing to blame. "To the pure all things are pure." It would really have been more consistent with the character of a "verray parfit gentil knight" to have omitted these reflections.

2288. **it is good** (for) **a man** (to) **ben at his large** seems not to have here its usual meaning of being quite unconstrained, but of not being constrained to occupy one's self with details.

2294. **thise bokes olde**: one of these books has been shown to be the *Teseide* of Boccaccio; but Boccaccio's name is not found in the works of Chaucer.

2308. "Hunting" and "venerye" are words that came t
Chaucer from different sources, the Saxon and the Latin. It i
easy to fancy a difference of meaning, but hard to establish any

2313. **tho thre formes**: see lines 2298–2299.

2367. **The nexte houre of Mars folwinge this**: the fourt
hour of the day. See lines 2217 and 2271.

2396. **doth me**: makes me endure all this woe.

2399. **the place**: see line 1862.

2405. **do that**: cause that I have victory.

2417. Such offerings of part were the earnest of the dev
tion of the entire self to the God. By similar acts man ha
bound himself to his fellow-man. The general use of writi
has tended to displace these methods of public acknowledgme
of our intentions, and to make us incapable of understandi
their former solemnity.

2451. **agayn his kinde**: against his nature, referring to t
Saturn of the astrologers, who was as different from either t
Saturn of the early Romans or the Saturn of the Roman po
as the latter were from each other. Add to these the plan
Saturn, and you have a confusion from which poetry seeks
release, however much science may protest.

> "The intelligible forms of ancient poets,
> The fair humanities of old religion,
> * * * * * * *
> They live no longer in the faith of reason,
> But still the heart doth need a language, still
> Doth the old instinct bring back the old names:
> And to yon starry world they now are gone,
> Spirits or gods that used to share the earth
> With man as with their friend."
>
> — SCHILLER'S *Wallenstein*, Coleridge's Translati

2454. **wide for to turne**: Uranus and Neptune were

known to the astrologers, and consequently Saturn was to them the most distant and the slowest of the planets.

2519–2520. Translate the "he's" by this one, that one, that other.

2614. **He . . . he**: one . . . another.

2616. **he him hurtleth**: one overthrows another.

2621. Theseus causes them to rest (in order) to refresh themselves. "Hem" is used for "them" and for "themselves."

2623–2624. The meaning of these two lines is so plain that we see it might be more precisely expressed by supplying "each has" after "and."

2628. **hunte**: see lines 1678, 2018.

2630–2632. There is (not) in Belmarie no lion that is hunted or famished so fell nor so desirous of the blood, etc.

2641. **he take**: Palamon is taken.

2647. **er he were take**: before he (Palamon) was taken.

2651. **by composicioun**: in accordance with the terms of the contest. See line 2554.

2673. **Been in hir wele**: are exultant. Arcite had lived three years at the court of Theseus, and won the love of all. See line 1432 ff.

2676. **of his helm y-don**: do off, or doff, take off.

2678. **large place**: you can easily make a sketch of the enclosure from the description (l. 1885 ff.). It was built on the spot where Palamon and Arcite had fought (l. 1862). Emily is seated with the rest of the court on the south side where she may see the combatants "under the sonne" (to misapply, perhaps, Chaucer's phrase). Arcite spurs his horse from one end to the other of the broad space (large place) between her seat and the lists.

2683. **And was al his chere, as in his herte**: in reading well on the first "his," and pause before and after "as in his

herte." "She was all his (his delight, his joy), as he imagined in his heart." But his imaginings are suddenly made vain. Mars had given victory to his worshipper; Mars could give nothing more.

2696. **corven**: the "layneres" (l. 2504) were cut, not unlaced.

2698. **memorie**: not simply conscious, but remembering the great joy of the instant before.

2710. **That . . . his brest-boon**: whose breast-bone was pierced. See line 2606.

2711. **othere woundes**: we would say, "for broken arms and other woundes."

2713. **save**: men believed that diseased and maimed bodies could be cured by certain phrases, written, spoken, or chanted, either where the sufferer was or elsewhere. They also believed that a remedy for many bodily ills was found in sage, not to mention a multitude of other herbs.

2719. **disconfitinge**: what took place there was not considered a defeat and disgrace, but merely a joust or tournament.

2731–2734. **leet crye**: Theseus bade proclaim that the victory belonged to one side as much as to the other.

2749–2751. **vertu expulsyf**: the animal virtue is placed in the brain, and is here expulsive, or tends to expel the poison (the corrupt blood); the natural virtue is placed in the liver and moves the blood through the veins. It appears that the virtue animal could not get the poisonous blood away from the virtue natural; in other words, the corruption spread through all the veins.

2760. **to chirche**: for burial.

2761. **This al and som**: this is al and som, the conclusion of the whole matter is.

2762. **For which** (reason).

2764. Seated at a desk we read with glossary and notes amid scenes unlike those in which Chaucer wrote, more unlike those in which the knight told his story. He has relieved his fellow-riders of the tedium of his medical disquisition by a playful remark, and now recalls their attention by the otherwise superfluous "as ye shul after here." They thought for a time they were listening to Arcite himself; but just as the tenderness of the vision became too sad to endure, the knight is himself again, and in humorous wise disclaims theology as he had previously renounced medicine.

2774. **departing**: severing of our companionship.

2779. The natural or artistic utterance of an emotion readily affects the hearer, less often the reader, rarely the student who has to scan and parse. This last has then to be told that this brief expresses itself with repetitions of the same thought, often of the same words.

> "Alone, alone, all, all alone,
> Alone on the wide, wide sea!
> And never a saint took pity on
> My soul in agony."
>
> — COLERIDGE'S *Ancient Mariner*.

2791. **that art**: the art of love, the proper qualities and conduct of a perfect lover.

> "Love hath me taught no more of his art,
> But serve alway and stinte for no wo."
>
> — CHAUCER'S *Compleynt*, line 42.

2792. So may Jupiter have some thought of my soul.

2796. **ye shul been a wyf**: you are destined to be a wife.

2809–2815. His spirit has changed its abode, and the knight follows it no farther for three potent reasons, but prays that Mars may guide the spirit to the place "wher divinistres writen that they (the spirits) dwelle."

2874–2877. The white gloves, the green crown, the bright sword, the bare face — all go with Arcite. Theseus laid Arcite on the bier, and wept.

The Mss. have no punctuation; the editions differ among themselves. The variant (l. 2874), "Upon his hondes hadde he gloves white," may have arisen from not noting that this line might be read with what follows.

2885. **passing**: surpassing others in respect of weeping — weeping more than the rest.

2888. **degree**: according to his rank, more rich than that of humbler men.

2962. **in no disjoynt**: with no failure.

2977. **Unwist of him**: it being unknown to him or without his knowledge.

2984. I do not know whether this means that his gaze was fixed or ranged from one object to another.

2987. This line is contrasted with line 2995, "the cause above" (the heavens) with the "world adoun." The curious argumentation that follows has many a parallel, and grows naturally out of certain mediæval conceptions. Chaucer actually took it from certain passages in Boethius. Each planet was embedded at one spot in a spherical, crystalline shell of its own, the centre of which was the earth. The stars had a shell all themselves. Outside of the shell in which the stars were set was another shell, the *primum mobile*, Milton's "First Moved." This *mobile* or thing movable requires a mover, who is God; but the thing itself keeps all the celestial machinery in motion after that. This mechanical contrivance would fall all to pieces if it were not held together by love. Contrast with the stable heavens the unstable things of earth, where even oaks and stones waste away, where all things change; argal, we ought to change with them, and turn our grief and mourning to joy.

3002. Only it pleases me to express my opinion.

3006. Think of anything you please; you can always regard it as a part of something else. But this whole is in its turn a part of something else, and so on till you would attain the ultimate real whole, "parfit and stable," from which you would say the "corrumpable" thing you started with was derived. Some do not refuse the name of philosophy to such ideas.

3015. **with-outen any lye**: without doubt.

3028. **That nedeth . . . He moot ben deed**: that (it) is necessary that he should die.

3036. **prince**: *princeps*, *principium*, beginning. *Primus*, first, in time and in excellence of every kind.

3064. **Can he hem thank**? See line 1808.

3084. **kinges brother sone**: king's brother's son. Brother is the Old English genitive which was already beginning to be replaced by the form brotheres or brothers, which we write brother's.

3089. Mercy ought to do more than what mere justice requires.

THE NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE

3957. The knight, with the sympathy of the company, begs the monk to desist, and not to add another to the dozen or more sad stories which he had told already. It seemed as if he might go on forever. The subject was inexhaustible; so, too, was the monk. He had said: —

> "I wol biwayle in maner of tragedie
> The harm of hem that stode in heigh degree,
> And fillen so that there nas no remedie
> To bringe hem out of hir adversitee;

For certein, whan that fortune list to flee,
Ther may no man the course of hir withholde;
Lat no man truste on blind prosperitee;
Be war by thise ensamples trewe and olde."

Lucifer, Adam, Samson, Hercules, Nero, and many more ha been passed in review with delightful disregard of the bounda ries between myth and history that we have been taught t observe.

3972–3975. **how "Fortune etc.":** The host echoes th words of the last stanza of the monk's tale: —

"Anhanged was Cresus, the proude king,
His royal trone mighte him not availle, —
Tragedie is noon other maner thing,
Ne can in singing crye ne biwaille
But for that fortune alway wol assaille
With unwar strook the regnes that been proude;
For when men trusteth hir, than wol she faille
And covere hir brighte face with a cloude."

3986. **hevene:** heaven's.

3995. See Prologue, line 165, for the monk's character.

4006. **so moot I go:** as sure as I am alive, so may I have t use of my limbs, so may I thrive.

4022. **hir halle:** the "narwe cotage" had two rooms, call here, with humorous exaggeration, bower and hall. There w no chimney; the smoke escaped through crevices. The li stock probably shared the hovel with the widow and her t daughters.

4030. She had no gout to keep her from dancing.

4045–4046. His clock was the celestial equator which could see "in his mind's eye," as degree after degree of t circle rose above the horizon. At all events, he crowed as e fifteenth degree arose.

4069. Skeat has found the song this comes from, and cites verse 4064 as an indication that Chaucer had the whole stanza in mind.

"My lefe is faren in lond
Allas why is she so?
And I am so sore bound
I may not com her to.
She hath my hert in hold
Wherever she ride or go,
With trew love a thousand-fold.

4081. **Shame**: you really were asleep. There's nothing here. Shame on you for being so frightened.

4090. (That) **was lyk an hound**.

4118–4127. For "colera," *i.e.* "choleric humor" and "humour of malencolye" in line 4123, and "othere humours" in line 4127, see line 420. "Madamoysele Pertelote" is talking not after the manner of hens, but of contemporary physicians. Quotations and references are given in the notes of Tyrwhitt and Skeat.

4125. "**For fere of beres, or** (that) **develes wole him take**" is a change of construction not common or approved in modern English.

4130. **Catoun**: Dionysius Cato is a name found in the title of a popular book of the fourth century, containing maxims of morality and rules of conduct.

4131. Make no account of dreams.

4133. **as tak**: so "as keep" in line 2302, "as sende" in line 2317.

4145. "Complecciouη" is not the color of the face, but the bodily constitution; here "colerik," or abounding in the choleric humor.

4156. **mery**: pleasant. Probably here in the sense of abundant, flourishing.

4160. **graunt mercy**: *grand merci*, great thanks.

4172–4173. There is no need of any argument about it; the facts speak for themselves.

4174. **gretteste auctour**: Cicero in his work on *Divination*. An author unique among the greatest. See Stoffel, *Anglia*, XXVII, 253.

4177. **happed**: it happened.

4179. **streit of herbergage**: such lack of lodgings. We require in general that both clauses should be constructed alike; exact parallelism is frequently absent from the language of Chaucer. His consciousness of the parts of speech did not outweigh his sense that the words as they stood expressed what he wanted to say.

4185. **as it wolde falle**: just as it happened.

4190. **as in commune**: the general direction that fortune gives to the course of our lives is modified by choice or chance or other powers. Fortune was originally a very solid being of flesh and blood, capable of struggling against those who would thwart her purpose.

4191. We have lost for the most part whatever distinction existed between "it was" and "it were"; we still say "if it were," but no longer "before it were." See line 2647. Many now always say "if it was," while others always say "if it were," even when the sense requires "if it was." Such changes as were going on in the past are going on now, and men cannot cease changing their language.

4210. **Do . . . arresten**: this does not mean "do stop the cart," but "cause the stopping of this cart," "have it stopped."

4222. **falle in suspecioun**: to have suspicions.

4268. Chaucer could say "he mette," "he dreamed," or

"him mette," (it) dreamed to him, it seemed to him in his dream. With either of these it was possible to join "a wonder dream." **agayn the day**: toward morning, which was the time for truest dreams.

"I had a vision when the night was late." — TENNYSON.

4294. **at the same tide**: at the same time.

4307. **For traisoun**: for fear of treason.

4344. I make no account of laxatives, do not value them.

4354. "Woman is man's confusion." Chanticleer's version does not agree with this, but has the merit of being more pleasing to Dame Partlet, who, poor woman, knew no Latin, and should not have attempted to lecture her lord.

4365. **a corn** (that) **lay**.

4378. "Bede then shows by what questions and answers they proved out of Scripture that this world began at the vernal equinox, or on the 21st of March, the moon then being full — one of two 'great lights.' It was in spring, because it is said the earth brought forth grass; it was equinox, because light was said to have been divided equally from darkness." — MORLEY, *English Writers*, II, 146. March was also considered the first month of the year, which began not on the 1st but the 25th of March.

4380–4385. **Sin March bigan**: "the month when God first made man" was complete, and thirty-two days more had passed, and this brings us to the 3d of May. The sun had traversed in his journey from west to east twenty-one degrees of Taurus, and this again indicates the 3d of May. So grand an event as the fulfilment of Chanticleer's dream, with his justification of his forebodings, cannot be fitly dated in the phrase of tradesmen and bookkeepers.

4397–4399. These verses should be read with grave face and

in solemn tone, and if you do not feel the full force of Chaucer's suggestion that "some rethor" might take for a text the mutability of human affairs, you need more experience either of life or of Chaucer.

4401. **al so trewe**: quite as true.

4407. **forn-cast**: foreordained by the contrivance of the powers on high.

4424–4440. These questions of "fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute" bulked large in Chaucer's mind. His translation of Boethius and the reflections that interrupt the course even of his lighter poems show his preoccupation with those great interests of the Middle Ages, for he does not exaggerate when he says: —

> "That in scole is greet altercacioun
> In this matere, and greet disputisoun,
> And hath been of an hundred thousand men."

Sometimes, however, he seems to be laughing at this overstrain on human wits, and he is unable to explain on the principles of this high philosophy how the purpose of a dream could be thwarted by the "cold counsel" of a woman. But here he checks himself again. "Is their counsel really cold? Authors say so, the cock says so, but I can conjecture no harm of any woman."

4430. **bulte it to the bren**: sift till bran and grain are entirely separated.

4433 ff. There are three questions Chaucer "wol not han to do of," nor can I. Does absolute foreknowledge constrain (1) by simple necessity, or (2) not at all, or (3) by conditional necessity?

4487. He must have entertained himself very agreeably with them.

4493. **of herte**: he sang with all his heart.

4506. The cock refrained from crowing, and did not wake up the young man in time for his ordination.

4507 ff. No comparison between the wisdom and discretion of your father and the subtlety of him, *i.e.* the hero in *Daun Burnel the Asse.* The "of" is somewhat displaced; the meaning would have been expressed by "of him the subtiltee."

4513. "Man hath" and "men hath" were both used in the sense of one has. "Men" is in such use not a plural, but a worn form of "man," which has ceased to call to mind a human being or an adult male, and is read here "as one that could," etc.

4519. Read Ecclesiasticus on flattery.

4549. The beginning of title or first line often denoted the book. *Æneidos Libri XII*, gave the name *Eneydos* to what we call the *Æneid.* The passage in which Pyrrhus with his drawn sword appears is familiar to any one who has read Vergil, *Æneidos Liber II.*

4545 f. This comparison of great things with small, the alarm of the hens with the terror of women at the burning of Troy, Rome, and Carthage, is a form of humor that manifests itself here and there even in our time.

4572. **many another man**: many a man besides.

4584 f. The Flemings were foreigners, if not "foreign devils" to Jack Straw's followers in 1381.

4635. "My Lord the Bishop," or some such addition; perhaps the Archbishop of Canterbury from 1381 to 1396, William Courtenay.

PROPER NAMES

Adoun, Adonis, 2224. Venus loved him in vain, and mourned his untimely death.

Alisaundre, Alexandria in Egypt, 51. It was won by Pierre de Lusignan in 1365.

Amadrides, Hamadryades, 2928. To the ancient Greeks they were nymphs whose life depended on that of their trees.

Amazones, Amazons, 880. The Greeks of the Heroic Age frequently battled with this race of women that dwelled about the Black Sea.

Amphioun, Amphion, 1546. In the Heroic Age he made himself king of Thebes in Bœotia.

Antonius, Mark Antony, 2032. He killed himself at Alexandria, 30 B.C.

Arcíta, 1013; **Árcita**, 2761; **Arcíte**, 1031; **Árcite**, 1344, Arcite. This Theban knight first appears in the *Teseide* of Boccaccio.

Argus, Argus, 1390. He had a hundred eyes, was set to guard Io, was charmed to sleep, and slain by Mercury.

Aristotle, Aristotle, 295. This Grecian philosopher (384–322 B.C.) ruled the spirits of men in the centuries that preceded the Renaissance.

Artoys, Artois, 86. Nearly the modern Pas-de-Calais in Northern France, a province of ancient France; in Chaucer's time, a countship.

Atthalante, Atalanta, 2070. She shared with Meleager in the

hunt for the Caledonian boar, and became unwittingly the cause of Meleager's death.

Atthenes, Athens in Greece, 861; Athenians, 880.

Attheon, Actæon, 2065. He saw Diana bathing, and was changed by her into a stag and torn in pieces by his own dogs.

Austin, St. Augustine, 187. From the works of this greatest of the Latin Fathers (354–430) rules were deduced that were adopted by as many as thirty monastic fraternities.

Averrois, Averroes, 433. This Spanish-Arabian philosopher (1126–1198) was famed not only for medical works, but for works on law, mathematics, etc., and particularly for a commentary on Aristotle.

Avicen, Avicenna, 432. The medical works of this Arabian philosopher (980–1037) were, in a Latin translation, used in European schools till 1700.

Baldeswelle, Baldeswell in Norfolk, 620.

Bathe, Bath in Somersetshire, 445.

Belle, Bell, inn in Southwark, 719.

Belmarye, Benmarin, 57. The latter is Froissart's name for this Moorish kingdom in Northern Africa; others called it Balmeryne and Belmore.

Benedit, Benedict, 173. This Italian monk (480–543) prescribed to his followers the observance of certain times for manual and mental labor as well as for their religious duties.

Berwik, Berwick-on-Tweed in Northumberland, 692.

Boece, Boëthius, 4432. This Roman philosopher (475–524) held high position in the state and was charged with treason and put to death. He wrote *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, which Chaucer translated.

Boloigne, Boulogne in France, 465.

Bradwardyn, Bradwardine, 4432. This English theologian and mathematician (1290–1349) was rightly called Doctor Profundus.

Britayne, Brittany, 409. The great northwestern peninsula of France was one of those independent duchies whose union formed France.

Burdeux, Bordeaux in Southwestern France, 397.

Burnel, Brunellus, 4502. Like Reynard the Fox or Bruin the Bear, is Brunell (Browny) the Ass.

Cadme, Cadmus, 1546. Thebes in Bœotia was reputed to have been founded by this Tyrian.

Calistopee, Callisto, 2056. She incurred the wrath of the chaste Diana and was changed into a bear; on the point of being slain, she was transformed by Jupiter into the constellation Ursa Major, or, according to Chaucer, into the lodestar, which is in Ursa Minor.

Cappaneus, Capaneus, 932. This one of the seven heroes who marched from Argos against Thebes was struck by Jupiter with lightning. A different legend from that followed by Chaucer makes his wife to have flung herself into the flames and to have perished.

Cartage, Carthage, in Northern Africa, 404.

Catoun, Dionysius Cato, 4161. *Disticha de Moribus ad Filium*, of which he was reputed author, was popular in the Middle Ages, and was translated into French and English.

Caunterbury, Canterbury in Kent, 16.

Chauntecleer, Chanticleer, 4039. Compare like names for other animals than the cock: Reynard, Bruin, etc.

Chepe, Cheapside in London, 754.

Cipioun, Scipio Africanus the Younger, 4314. This Roman general (185–129 B.C.) appears in Cicero's *De Republica*,

relating a dream of moral import, on which Macrobius wrote a commentary.

Citherea, Venus, 2215. She has the name Cytherea from the island Cythera or from a Cretan town of that name.

Colle, name of a dog, 4573.

Coloigne, Cologne, 466. Many pilgrims resorted thither to the relics, among which are the bones of the Three Wise Men of the East.

Constantyn, Constantine the African, 433. He was born in Carthage, studied in Babylon, taught medicine at Salerno, translated from Greek and Arabic, died in 1087.

Creon, Creon, 938. He ruled Thebes after the exile of Œdipus, destroyed the Argive kings that assailed him, and was in turn attacked and slain by Theseus, in Chaucer's version.

Cresus, Crœsus, 1946. King of Lydia (560 B.C.); he was captured by Cyrus, 546 B.C.

Crete, Crete, 980. This Grecian island in the Mediterranean is famous in legend and history, while the buried cities recently unearthed, antedate both. In Chaucer's time it belonged to Venice.

Damascien, Johannes Damascenus, 433. John of Damascus, theologian and father of the Eastern church, died about 760.

Dane, Daphne, 2062. She was beloved by Apollo and changed into a laurel.

Deiscorides, Dioscorides, 430. A Greek physician of the second century A.D.

Dertemouthe, Dartmouth, 389. This town of Devonshire at the mouth of the Dart was an important seaport in the Middle Ages.

Diane, Diana, 1682. This Italian divinity was associated in some way with the moon, chastity, hunting, and later with the Greek Artemis.

Ecclesiaste, Ecclesiasticus, 4519. This is not Ecclesiastes, but a non-canonical book of the Old Testament.

Ector, Hector, 2832. This son of Priam and husband of Andromache was slain by Achilles, who gave up the dead body to the Trojans at the prayer of the father.

Egeus, Ægeus, 2838. In a Greek legend Ægeus, the father of Theseus, supposing his son to have been devoured by the Minotaur, threw himself into sea.

Emelye and **Emelya,** Emily, 871, 1077.

Eneydos, Æneid, 4549. "As seith us Æneidos liber secundus" would be the full form.

Engelond, England, 16.

Epicurus, Epicurus, 336. This Greek philosopher (342–270 B.C.) got a bad name by teaching that no one ought to make pain the aim of action.

Esculapius, Æsculapius, 429. The fabled son of Apollo and god of physicians appears in Chaucer among the medical authorities of the Middle Ages.

Femenye, country of the Amazons, 866.

Finistere, Cape Finisterre, in Northwest Spain, 408.

Flaundres, Flanders, 86. To Chaucer this name meant a country which included the modern Flanders and considerably more.

Flaundrish, Flemish, 272.

Fleming, Flemish resident of England, 4586.

Galgopheye, Gargaphia, 2626. The former may be the same as the latter, and the latter is only known as the place in which, according to Ovid, Actæon was torn by his hounds.

Galice, Galicia, 466. To this province in Northwestern Spain

pilgrims once flocked to visit the shrine of St. James of Compostella.

Galien, Galen, 431. This Greek physician and philosopher (130–200 A.D.) left numerous works and was a high authority in medicine.

Gatesden, John Gatisden, 434. He was a distinguished physician of Oxford not long before the birth of Chaucer.

Gaufred, Geoffrey de Vinsauf, 4537. He was an Englishman, flourished in the twelfth century, and wrote in Latin *Nova Poetria*. He thought he was a poet and could teach others by his example to be poets too.

Gaunt, Ghent, in East Flanders, 448.

Genilon, Ganelon, 4417. One of the twelve peers of Charlemagne; he caused by his treachery the death of Roland and the defeat at Roncesvalles.

Gerland, Garland, 4573. The name of a dog.

Gilbertyn, Gilbertine, 434. He has been identified with Gilbertus Anglicus.

Gootlond, Gottland, 408. Few voyagers went farther north than this island in the Baltic.

Grece, Greece, 962.

Grek, Greek, 2899.

Grete See, Mediterranean, 59.

Haly, Haly, 431. An Arabian physician and astronomer of the twelfth century.

Hasdrubal, Hasdrubal, 4553. He was king of Carthage when it was burnt by the Romans, 146 B.C.

Hereos, Eros, 1374. This Greek word for love and for the love-god is here used of the despondency of love.

Huberd, Hubert, 269.

Hulle, Hull in Yorkshire, 404. This had become an important port in the thirteenth century.

Ilioun, Ilion, 4546. This citadel of Troy was the one Chaucer had read about in Vergil.

Inde, India, 2156. Chaucer's Inde is of course not the definite India of our atlas or globe; but one should know that traders, travellers, and missionaries had revealed to Europe the wonderful civilizations of Asia, that in 1306 Asia had a Christian bishop, and in 1328 Jourdain de Severac was made bishop of Collam in India.

Ipolita, Hippolyte, 868. Nothing need be added to what is contained in the text, except that there are many variations in her story which may be found at least in part in any classical dictionary.

Jakke Straw, Jack Straw, 4584. A leader in the peasant insurrection of 1381.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 463.

Jove, Jupiter, 2222.

Julian, St. Julian, 340. His legend may be found in Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art.*

Kenelm, St. Kenelm, 4300. At the age of seven, becoming king of the Mercians (821), Cenhelm was murdered at the command of his sister under whose tutelage he was. He had dreamed that he was changed into a bird and flew to heaven from the top of a tree bright with candles, when it was felled by a friend.

Kenulphus, Kenulphus, 4301. This is the Latinized form of the name of Cenwulf, king of Mercia from 796 to 819.

Lettow, Lithuania, 54. This grand-duchy afforded a fine field for arms. It fought with Poles, Russians, and Teutonic knights. It was finally Christianized under its duke Jagello,

who ascended the throne of Poland in 1386. There are still Lithuanians, but no Lithuania.

London, London, 382.

Loy, St. Eligius, 120. St. Eloi (588–659) was a humble saint, a layman who helped the poor, a goldsmith whose work pleased kings; but for all that he was made bishop of Noyon.

Lucina, Lucina, 2085. She was invoked by women in labor; the light-bringer, she was later identified with Diana.

Lyde, Lydia, 4328. The Lydian empire in Asia Minor came to an end with the conquest of Crœsus by Cyrus, 546 B.C.

Lyeys (Layas in Froissart), Ayas, 58. This place was won from the Turks by Pierre of Lusignan about 1367. It is near Adana in Asia Minor.

Lygurge, Lycurgus, 2129. Lycurgus, a king of Thrace in mythology, need not be identified with this king of Thrace in romance.

Macrobeus, Macrobius, 4313. This Roman grammarian (fifth century) has left a commentary on Cicero's *Dream of Scipio* and a collection of dialogues on multifarious topics.

Malkin, name of a servant girl, 4574.

Malle, Moll, 4021. Here the name of a sheep.

Mars, Mars, 975. Mars had been among the Romans a great warrior, the ideal warrior, the god of warriors. What a common-gazer might mistake for the worship of Mars still goes on in the delight of men in representations of him in art. Could Chaucer believe that any such being ever had existed? The Mars that he could see in the sky, the wandering star, the red planet — you would search Chaucer's works in vain to find any hint of his guesses about its nature. As for his influence on human affairs, with many things the astrologers said about it Chaucer expressly states that he did not agree.

Marte, Mars, 2021.

Maudelayne, Magdalen, 410. Here the name of a ship.

Maure, St. Maure, 173. He was a disciple of St. Benedict, founded, it was said, a Benedictine abbey in France in 543.

Meleagre, Meleager, 2071. He gave to Atalanta the prize of the hunt. His mother's brothers objected and he slew them. His mother thereupon burned the brand which she had once carefully preserved, for he was fated to live only so long as it lasted.

Mercenrike, Mercia, 4302. An Anglian kingdom in Central England, which lasted from the sixth to the ninth century.

Mercurie, Mercury, 1385. A Roman god about whom the stories came to be told that had been told about the Greek Hermes. He appears to the souls of the sleeping and the dead, with a communication from some god. Chaucer has in mind Ovid's description of the way in which he was arrayed.

Middelburgh, Middelburg, 277. It was once a great commercial town, a member of the Hanseatic League. It is in Holland on the island of Walcheren.

Minotaur, Minotaur, 980. This monster, a human body and bull's head, was fed in the Cretan labyrinth on youths and maidens, sent as tribute from Athens, till he was slain by Theseus.

Narcisus, Narcissus, 1941. This "faire of yore agon" in punishment for his scorn of others was made to perish with love of his own reflection in the water.

Nero, Nero, 2032. The "grete Nero" is of course the emperor; there were other Neros. He died by his own hand to escape his pursuers, 68 A.D.

Northfolk, Norfolk, 619. In this county, which was once a part of East Anglia, the name Chaucer occurs as early as 1275.

Orewelle, Orwell, 277. The port of Orwell was at Harwich in Essex, opposite the confluence of the Stour and the Orwell.
Oxenford, Oxford, 285.

Palamoun, Palamon, 1070.
Palatye, Palathia, 65.
Perotheus, Pirithous, 1191. He was helped by Theseus in the conflict with the Centaurs, and also in his attempt to take Proserpine from Hades, according to the ancient myth. That he was sought there after his death by Theseus, Chaucer learns from *Le Roman de la Rose*.
Pertelote, Partlet, 4060.
Phebus, Phœbus, 1493. This which meant originally an attribute of the sun-god, or the sun as god, had been used so much that it had come to mean no more than the sun.
Phisiologus, Physiologus, 4461. Sometimes used as the name of an author, but really the name of a sort of book, otherwise called Bestiary, which tells a few facts, or fictions about a few animals, with their signification. Thus, we may learn from the pigeon not to rob, for she does not live on prey.
Pirrus, Pyrrhus, 4547. Priam's death at the hand of Achilles' son, Pyrrhus, was esteemed the most affecting incident in the fall of Troy.
Pluto, Pluto, 2082. He was the husband of Ceres' daughter Proserpine. He had grieved Ceres by carrying off her daughter, Proserpine.
Poules, St. Paul's (Cathedral), 509.

Priam, Priam, 4548. The last king of Troy. His story was once known to all schoolboys. If you cannot read Latin, you may read it in some translation of the *Æneid* rather than in a classical dictionary.

Pruce, Prussia, 53; Prussian, 2122. Pruce was a Baltic land which the Order of the Teutonic Knights had wrested from the heathen Slavs, and were holding against the Poles and Lithuanians.

Razis, Rhasis, 432. A cyclopædia of medicine was left by this Arabian-Persian who died about 932.

Romayn, Roman, 4555.

Rouncivale, Hospital of the Blessed Mary of Rouncyvalle at Charing (London), 670.

Ruce, Russia, 54. We would like to know what Ruce meant to Chaucer; something quite different certainly from what Russia means to us.

Rufus, Rufus, 430. A Greek physician at Ephesus about 100 A.D.

Russel, Russell, 4524. It means the reddish one.

Salamon, Solomon, 1942.

Sampson, Samson, 2466.

Satalye, Attalia, 58. This place, of which one modern name is Adalia, is on the south coast of Asia Minor.

Scariot, (Judas) Iscariot, 4417.

Scithia, Scythia, 867. A vague name at the best for Central Asia.

Serapion, Serapion, 432. An Arabian physician of the eleventh century.

Sinon, Sinon, 4418. He pretended to be a deserter from the Greeks and betrayed Troy into their hands.

Southwerk, Southwark, 20. Now a portion of London south of the Thames.

Spayne, Spain, 409.

Stace, Statius, 2294. He is here called Stace of Thebes as the author of the *Thebais*. He was a Roman poet who died about 86 A.D.

Tabard, an inn, 20. Its sign was a sleeveless coat, such as heralds wear.

Talbot, name of a dog, 4573.

Tars, Tartary (Skeat), Tarsus (Liddell), 2160.

Thebes, Thebes, 933. The chief city of Bœotia, ruled over by Creon.

Thomas, St. Thomas à Becket, 826. He was slain in 1172, and canonized in 1220. His shrine was destroyed in the time of Henry VIII.

Trace, Thrace, 1638. A region north of Greece.

Tramissene, Tremessen, 62. A Moorish kingdom in Africa, near the present Gulf of Tremessen.

Troye, Troy, 2833. Chaucer's statements about Troy are derived from Latin writers, mostly post-classical.

Turkye, Turkey, 66.

Turnus, 1945. This king of the Rutulians in Italy was slain by Æneas.

Venus, Venus, 1904.

Vulcanus, Vulcan, 2222.

Ware. Ware, 692. This town is in Hertfordshire about twenty miles north of London.

Watte, Walter, 643.

William, William the Conqueror, 324.

Ypres, Ypres, 448. A town in West Flanders, once famous for its linen and woollen.

Zephirus, Zephyrus, Zephyr, 5. The west wind.

GLOSSARY

a, on; **a Goddes name**, in God's name, 854.
a, ah, 1785.
able, fit, 167.
abood, delay, 965.
aboute, around, 488; in turn, 890.
abrayde, awoke, 4198.
abregge, abridge, 2999.
abye, aboughte, abought, suffered from, 2303; suffered for, 3100.
accomplice, accomplish, 2864.
accord, acord, agreement, 838; harmony, 4069.
accordant, acordaunt, suitable, 37, 4026.
achat, purchase, 571.
achatour, purchaser, 568.
acorde, agree, 830; it suited, 244.
actes, records, 4326.
a-day, in the day, 2623.
adoun, down, downwards, 393.
adrad, afraid, 605.
afered (aferd), afraid, 628.
affeccioun, affection, 1158.
affile, render smooth, 712.
affrayed, scared, 4468.
after, according to, 125.
after oon, alike, 341.
agaste, agaste, agast, frighten, 2931; **Arcita him (himself) agaste**, A. was affrighted, 2424.
agayn, again, against, toward, 2680.
agoon, agon, ago, gone, past, 2802.
agrief, amiss, 4083.
aiel, grandfather, 2477.
al, all, entire; quite, wholly, 76; although, 297, 734.
alaunt, wolf-hound, 2148.
alderbest, best of all, 710.
alderman, chief officer of a guild, 372.
ale-stake, support of a tavern sign, 667.
algate, always, 571.

allegge, allege, 3000.
aller, alder, of all; **our aller**, of us all, 823; **hir aller**, of them all, 586.
als, also, 3976.
amblere, ambling nag, 469.
amiddes, in the midst, 2009.
amonges, amongst, 759.
amorwe, on the morrow, 822.
amounte, signify, 2362.
anhange, hang, 4252.
anight, by night, 1042.
anlas, a short two-edged dagger, 357.
apaye, satisfy, 1868.
apike, adorn, 365.
appalle, weaken, 3053.
apparaillinge, preparation, 2913.
appetyt, desire, 1680.
arest, rest (of spears), 2602.
arette, consider, 726, 2729.
arm-greet, thick as one's arm, 2145.
armipotente, powerful in arms, 1982.
arraye, equip, 2046; arrange, 2867.
ars-metrike, arithmetic, 1898.
artow, art thou, 1141.
arwes, arrows, 107.
as, as if, 81; **as keep**, pray keep, 2302; **as nouthe**, at present, 462; **as out of that contree**, out of that country at least, 1345; **as by wey of possibilitee**, as far as possibilities are concerned, 1291.
ascencioun, ascending degree, 4045.
ascendent, ascendant, the point of the ecliptic on the eastern horizon at any moment, 417.
ashame, put to shame, 2667.
ashen, ashes, 1302.
aslake, assuage, 1760.
asp, aspen, 2921.
aspect, angle made at the eye by two heavenly bodies, 1087.
aspye, see, 1420.
assaut, assault, 989.
assaye, try, 1811.
assege, besiege, 881.
assise, assize, session, 314.
assoilling, absolution, 661.
asterte, asterte, astert, escape, 1595.
astone, astonie, astonish, 2361
astore, store, 609.
astronomye, astrology, 414.
asure, azure, 4052.
athamaunt, adamant, 1305.
a three, in three, 2934.

at-rede, outwit, 2449.
at-renne, outrun, 2449.
atte, at the, 29.
attempre, temperate, 4028.
auctour, author, 4174.
auter, altar, 1905.
avaunce, be profitable, 246.
avaunt, boast, 227.
avauntour, boaster, 4107.
aventure, adventure, chance, 25.
avisioun, vision, dream, 4304.
avow, vow, 2237.
avys, advice, consideration, opinion, 786.
axe, ask, 1347.
axing, demand, bidding, 1826.
ayeyns, against, 1787.

bacheler, aspirant to knighthood, 80.
bake-mete, meat pie, 343.
balled, bald, 198.
bane, destruction, 1097.
baner, banner, 966.
bar, baren, bore, 105, 721.
barbour, barber, 2025.
bareyne, barren, 1244.
barres, ornamental bands or bosses, 329.
batailled, embattled, indented like a battlement, 4050.
bauderye, gayety, 1926.
baudrik, bawdrik, baldric, suspended from one shoulder, and passing under the opposite arm, 116.
bedes (peire of), rosary, 159.
beest, beast, 4089.
beggestere, beggar (originally of females only), 242.
beme, trumpet, 4588.
benedicite, give praise to (him); often a mere exclamation, ben'dic'te, 1785.
benigne, kind, 518.
bente, grassy slope, 1981.
bere, bar, bore, born, bear, carry, 796, 2646.
bere, bear, 1640.
bere, bier, 2871.
berie, berry, 207.
beste, atte, in the best manner, 29.
bestes, beasts, 2929.
bet, better, 242.
bete, beat, 4512; **ybete**, embossed, 979.
bete, kindle, 2253.
beth war, beware, 4520.
bi-bledde, covered with blood, 2002.
bifalle, bifel, bifallen, bi falle, befall, 19.

biforen, biforn, bifore, before, in front, beforehand, 377, 450, 1376.
bihote, promise, 1854.
bi-japed, befooled, 1585.
biknowe, acknowledge, 1556, 4251.
bile, bill (of a bird), 4051.
biquethe, bequeath, 2768.
biraft, taken away from, 1361.
biseken, beseech, 918.
bisette, bisette, biset, employ, 279; establish, 3012.
biside, beside, 874; **of biside**, from the neighborhood of, 445.
bisides, him bisides, about him, 402.
bismotered, stained, 76.
bisy, busy, 321.
bit, bids, 187.
bithought, I am, I have thought (of), 767.
bitwixen, bitwixe, betwixt, 277, 880.
biwreye, disclose, reveal, 2229, 4241.
blankmanger, a compound of minced fowl with cream, rice, almond, sugar, eggs, etc., 387.
blede, bleed, 1801.
bleynte, blenched, started back, 1078.
blive, quickly, 2697.
bocher, butcher, 2025.
bokeler, buckler, 112.
bokelinge, buckling, 2503.
boket, bucket, 1533.
boles, bulls, 2139.
bond, bound, 2991.
bone, prayer, 2269.
boon, bone, 1177.
boras, borax, 630.
bord, table, 52.
borwe (to), in pledge, 1622.
bote, remedy, 424.
boteler, butler, 4324.
botme, bottom, 4291.
bouk, body, 2746.
bour, inner room, 4022.
bowes, boughs, 2917.
box, boxwood, 4588.
bracer, armguard (against the bowstring), 111.
brak, broke, 1468.
brast, burst, 4408.
brede, breadth, 1970.
breed, bread, 341.
breem, bream (fresh-water fish), 350.
breke, break, 551.
breme, fiercely, 1699.
bren, bran, 4430.

brend, burnished, 2162.
brenne, burn, 2331.
brenninge, burning, 996.
bresten, burst, 1980.
bretful, brimful, 687, 2164.
bretherhed, brotherhood (of a religious order), 511.
briddes, birds, 2929.
brond, firebrand, 2339.
brood, broad, 155, 3024.
brouke, use, 4490.
brouding, embroidery, 2498.
broun, brown, 109.
browe, eyebrow, 627, 2134.
broyded, braided, 1049.
bulte, built, 1548.
bulte, bolt, sift (of grain), 4430.
burdoun, bass accompaniment, 673.
burgeys, burgess, citizen, 369.
burned, burnished, 1983.
busk, bush, 2013.
but, unless, 582, 782, 2245.
but if, unless, 351, 656.
but that, except that, 3002.
by and by, side by side, 1011.
bying, buying, 569.

caitif, **caitives**, captive, wretch, wretched, 924, 1552, 1717.
can, can, know, know how, 210, 1780, 2312.
cantel, portion, 3008.
careful, sorrowful, 1565.
careyne, carrion, carcass, 2013.
carf, carved, 100.
carl, churl, fellow, 545.
carole, dance in a ring with accompaniment of singing, 1931.
carpe, talk, 474.
carte, cart, 4208; **chariot**, 2041.
cas, chance, 844; case, 797; cases of law, 323.
cas, quiver (of arrows), 2358.
cast, plot, 2468.
caste, conjecture, 2172; (**cast** for **casteth**), consider, 2854.
casuelly, accidentally, 4291.
catapuce, spurge (Euphorbia lathyris), 4155.
catel, property, goods, 373, 4017.
celle, branch convent, ruled by a prior, 172; cell (of the brain), 1376.
centaure, centaury (Centaurea nigra), 4153.
cerial, cerrial oak, bitter oak (Quersus cerris), 2290.

ceruce, white lead, 630.
ceynt, cincture, girdle, 329.
champartye, participation in power, 1949.
chaped, having scabbards with metal tips, 356.
chapeleyne, chaplain, 164.
chapman, trader, merchant, 397.
char, chariot, 2138.
charge, task, 733; ground of reproach, 2287.
charitable, kind, 143.
charitee, love (Christian charity), 452.
chasteyn, chestnut tree, 2922.
chaunterye, chantry, place with endowment for singing masses, 510.
chees, choose (thou), 1595.
chere, countenance, appearance, entertainment, 747, 913.
cherl, countryman, churl, 2459.
chevetayn, captain, 2555.
chevisaunce, loans, 282.
chirche, church (as place for burial or funeral), 2760.
chirking, shrill sounds, 2004.
chivachye, expedition on horseback, 85.
chuk, cluck, 4364.
citee, city, 939.
citole, small oblong box with strings across the top to be struck with fingers, 1959.
citryn, citron (in color), 2167.
clarree, wine, honey, and spices mixed and strained, 1471.
clene, clean, 133; **clennesse**, purity, 506.
clepen, call, name, 121; cry out, 643.
clerk, cleric, scholar, man of learning, 285.
cloisterer, resident in a cloister, 259.
clomben, ascended, 4388.
cloos, closed, 4522.
clos, enclosure, 4550.
clothered, clotted, 2745.
clothes, tapestries, draperies, 2281.
cofre, coffer, chest, 298.
cok, cock, 823.
colera (Latin), choler, 4118.
colered, provided with collars, 2152.
colerik, of bilious humor or temperament, 587.
colfox, brant-fox, 4405.
colpons, shreds, 679; billet (of wood), 2867.

cometh, come, 839.
communes, commons, commoners, 2509.
compassing, contrivance, 1996.
compeer, comrade, 670.
complexioun, **complecciioun**, temperament, constitution, bodily habit, 333, 4114.
compleynt, complaint, 2012.
composicioun, agreement, 848, 2651.
condicioun, condition, quality, 38.
confus, confused, 2230.
conscience, pity, sympathy, 142.
conseil, counsel, 1141; counsellor, 1147.
conserve, preserve, 2329.
constellacioun, the position of the sun, the moon, and the planets with regard to one another, 1088.
contek, strife, 2003.
contenaunce, appearance, 1916.
contrarie, adversary, 1859.
contree, country, 216.
conveye, escort, 2737.
cop, top, 554.
cope, a long cape or cloak worn by monks and friars, 260.
coppe, cup, 134.
corage, heart, 11.
coroune, crown, 2875.
correccioun, correction, 2461.
corrumpable, subject to decay, 3010.
corven, cut, 2696.
cosin, cousin, kinsman, 1131.
cote, hovel, 2457.
cote-armure, coat, embroidered with armorial insignia, worn over armor, 1016.
couched, embroidered, 2161, laid, 2933.
coude, could, knew, knew how to, 95, 476, 130.
countour, auditor (of accounts), 359.
countrefete, imitate, 139.
courtepy, short overcoat of course stuff, 290.
couthe, renowned, 14.
coverchief, kerchief, 453.
covine, trickery, 604.
cowardye, cowardice, 2730.
coy, quiet, 119.
cracching, scratching, 2834.
crafty, skilful, 1897.
crike, creek, 409.

Cristofre, St. Christopher's likeness, 115.
crop, shoot, 7 ; treetop, 1532.
croys, cross, 699.
crulle, curly, 81.
cure, care, thought, 303, 1007, 2853.
curious, skilful, 577.
curs, curse (excommunication), 655.
curteys, courteous, 250.
cut, lot, 835.

daliaunce, gossip, 211.
damoysele, miss, 4060.
dampned, condemned, 1175.
dar, dare, 1151.
darreyne, to decide, to decide one's right to, 1631, 1609.
daun, lord, sir, 1379, 3982.
daunger, danger, liability, control, 402, 663, 1849.
daungerous, haughty, 517.
daweninge, dawning, 4072.
daweth, dawns, 1676.
dayerye, dairy, 597.
dayesye, daisy, 332.
debat, debate, strife, 1754.
debonaire, gracious, 2282.
dede, deed, 742.
deduyt, pleasure, 2177.
deed, dead, 145.
deedly, deathlike, 913.
deef, deaf, 446.
deel, part, share, bit, 1825, 4024.
defye, renounce, spurn, 1304 ; defy, 4361.
degree, step, used for seats, 1890 ; situation, 1841 ; rank, 40.
del, see **deel**.
delivere, quick, active, 84.
delve, dig, 536.
delyt, delight, pleasure, 335, 1679.
deme, deem, 1881.
departe, separate, 1134.
depeynted, depicted, 2027.
dere, injure, 1822.
derke, dark, 1995.
derre, dearer, 1448.
desdeyn, disdain, 789.
despitous, merciless, cruel, 516, 1596.
destreyne, oppress, distress, 1455.
dette, debt, 280.
devise, relate, 994 ; plan, 1254.
devoir, duty, 2598.
devys, direction, 816.
deye, dairywoman, 4036.
deyne, deign, 4371.

deyntee, valuable, 168; dainty, 346.
deys, dais, 370.
diapred, having the surface figured in the weaving, 2158.
dich, ditch, 4038.
diched, provided with a moat, 1888.
dight, dressed, 1041; made ready, 1630.
digne, worthy, 141; too reserved, 517.
dike, make ditches, 536.
disconfitinge, disconfiture, defeat, 2719, 1008.
disconfort, discouragement, 2010.
disfigured, changed in aspect, 1403.
disherited, disinherited, 2926.
dishevele, dishevelled, 683.
disjoynt, failure, 2962.
dispence, expenditure, expense, 441, 1882.
disport, readiness to be amused, 137.
disposicioun, position, 1087; disposal, 2364.
disputisoun, disputation, 4428.
divininge, conjecturing, 2521.
divinistre, diviner (in no bad sense), 2811.
divisioun, distinction, 1780.
doke, duck, 4580.
dokke, cut short, dock, 590.
domes, decisions, 323.
doon, don, do, do, make, cause, 78.
dormant, kept standing (of a table), 353.
dorste, durst, 227.
doughtren, daughters, 4019.
doute, doubt, 487.
dowves, doves, 1962.
drecche, trouble, 4077.
drede, fear, 1776.
dredeful, timid, 1479.
drenching, drowning, 2456.
dresse, put in order, 106, 2594.
dreye, dry, 3024.
dreynt, drowned, 4272.
droughte, drought, 2.
droupe, droop, 107.
drugge, drudge, 1416.
duk, duke, 860.
dure, endure, 2770.
duske, grow dim, 2806.
dwelle, remain, 1661; delay 4340.
dye, die, 1109.
dys, dice, 1238.

ecclesiaste, minister, 708.
ech, each, 39.

echoon, echon, each one, 820.
eek, also, 5.
eet, ate, 2048.
effect, fact, purpose, event, 2207, 2259, 2482.
eft, again, 1669.
elde, old age, 2447.
ellebor, hellebore (Helleborus niger), 4154.
elles, else, 375.
embrouded, covered with embroidery, 89.
emforth, to the extent of, 2235.
empoysoning, poisoning, 2460.
emprise, enterprise, 2540.
encens, incense, 2429.
encombred, stuck fast, 508; wearied, 1718.
encrees, increase, 2184.
endelong, lengthwise, 1991; from one end to the other of, 2678.
endite, relate, 1380; compose, 95.
engendred, produced, 4, 421.
engendren, are produced, 4113.
engined, tortured, racked, 4250.
enhorte, encourage, 2851.
enoynt, anointed, 2961.
ensample, example, 496.
entente, purpose, 1000.
entune, intone, 123.
envined, having store of wine, 342.
equinoxial, equator, 4046.
er, before, 36.
erbe, herb, see **ive**.
erchedeken, archdeacon, 658.
ere, plough, 886.
eres, ears, 556.
erst, first, sooner, 776, 1566.
eschaunge, exchange, 278.
eschue, eschew, avoid, 3043.
ese, entertainment, 768.
esed, entertained, 29.
esily, easily, 469.
espye, discover, 1112.
estat, state, condition, 203, 522.
estres, interior parts, 1971.
esy, moderate, 441.
eterne, eternal, 1109; eternally, 3015.
even, just, 1864; proper, 83.
evene, evenly, 1523.
everich, every, each, every one, 241, 371, 1186.
everich a, every single, 733.
everichon, every one, 31.
ew, yew tree, 2923.
expouned, expounded, 4305.
ey, egg, 4035.
eyen, eyes, 152.
eyle, ail, 1081.

fader, father, 100.
fadme, fathoms, 2916.
faire, safely, without opposition, 984; carefully, 2697.
falding, sort of coarse cloth, 391.
falle, befall, 585.
falwe, fallow, yellowish, 1364.
famulier, familiar, on good terms, 215.
fare, behaviour, 1809.
fare, go, proceed, fare, 1265, 1372, 2435.
farsed, stuffed, 233.
faste, near, close, 719, 1478.
faught, fought, 399.
fayn, glad, gladly, 766.
fedde, fed, 146.
feeld, field, plain, 886, 977.
feend, fiend, 4476.
fel, felle, cruel, 2630. 1559.
felawe, fellow, partner, 648, 1624.
felaweshipe, fellowship, 32.
feld, felled, cut down, 2924.
fer, far, 388, 1850.
ferde, acted, 1647; behaved, 1372.
ferforthly (so), to such a degree, 960.
fermacies, remedies, 2713.
ferne, distant, 14.
ferre, farther, 48.
ferreste, farthest, 494.
ferther, further, 36.
ferthing, small portion, 134, 255.
feste, entertain, 2193.
festne, fasten, 195.
fet, fetched, brought, 819, 2527.
fetis, shapely, 157.
fetisly, elegantly, 124.
fettres, fetters, 1279.
fey, faith, 1126.
feyne, invent, feign, 705.
fil, fillen, fell, 845, 949.
file, file, polish, 2152.
firre, fir tree, 2921.
fithele, fiddle, 296.
flatour, flatterer, 4515.
flee, fly, 4132.
fleen, flee, escape, 1170.
fleigh, flew, 4529.
flete, swim, float, 2397.
flex, flax, 676.
fley, flew, 4362.
flikeringe, fluttering, 1962.
flotery, fluttering, wavy, 2883.
flour, flower, 4.
flour-de-lys, fleur-de-lis, 238.
floytinge, playing on the **flute**, whistling, 91.
folwe, follow, 2367.

fo, foo, foe, 63.
fond, found, 701.
foom, foam, 1659.
foot-mantel, mantle for a horse, often reaching to his feet (it might be folded over the rider's hips), 472.
for, against, 4307; because, 443; in spite of, 2745; in order that, 2879; **for to,** in order to, to, 13, 78.
for-blak, very black, 2144.
forlo, destroyed, 1560.
forn-cast, foreordained, 4407.
forneys, furnace, 202, 559.
for-old, very old, 2142.
for-pined, wasted away (by torment), 205; worn out, 1453.
fors, force; **do no fors of,** make no account of, 4131.
for-slewthen, waste in sloth, 4283.
forster, forester, 117.
forther-moor, farther on, 2069.
forthre, further, aid, 1148.
forthy, therefor, 1841.
fortunen, predict favorably, 417; make lucky or unlucky, 2377.
forward, agreement, promise, 33, 829.
forwite, know beforehand, 4424.
forwiting, foreknowledge, 4433.
forwoot, foreknows, 4424.
foryete, forget, 1882.
foryeve, forgive, 743.
fother, load (cart-load), 530 great quantity, 1908.
foundre, stumble (of a horse) 2087.
fowel, fowl, foul, fowl, bird 9, 190.
foyne, thrust, 1654, 2550.
frakenes, freckles, 2169.
frankeleyn, substantial house holder, franklin, 216.
fraternitee, guild (of crafts men), 364.
fredom, liberality, 46.
freendlich, friendly, 2680.
frere, friar, 208.
frete, eat, 2019.
frc, from, 44.
fulfille, fill full, 940.
fume, vapors (in the body) 4114.
fumetere, fumitory (Fumaria officinalis), 4153.

gabbe, lie, speak idly, 4256.
gadere, gatherer, 824.

galingale, sweet cyperus, 381.
game, sport, 853; pleasure, 2286.
gamed, it pleased, 534.
gan, began, did, would; **gan preye**, would pray, 301; **gan espye**, did see, 1112.
gappe, gap, 1639.
gargat, throat, 4525.
garleek, garlic, 634.
gastly, terrible, 1984.
gat, got, 703.
gat-tothed, having the teeth far apart, 468.
gaude grene, weld-green (dyed green with weld, Reseda luteola), 2079.
gauded, furnished with beads called gauds, 159.
gay, finely dressed, 74.
gayler, jailer, 1064.
gayne, avail, 1176.
gaytre (goat-tree), buckthorn (Rhamnus catharticus), 4155.
gentil, noble (by birth or breeding), 72; excellent, 718; good-natured, 647.
gere, gear, armor, 2180; utensils, 352; apparel, 365; manners, 1531.
gerful, changeable, 1538.
gerland, garland, 666.
gerner, garner, 593.
gery, changeable, 1536.
gesse, suppose, think, 82, 117.
gete, get, obtain, 291.
gigginge (g hard), fitting with straps, 2504.
gile, deceit, guile, 2596.
gilteless, guiltless, 1312.
ginglen (g soft), jingle, 170.
gipoun (g soft), a short coat worn under armor, but sometimes without, 75, 2120.
gipser (g soft), pouch, purse, 357.
girles, young people of either sex, 664.
gise, guise, way, 663.
gladere, one that makes glad, 2223.
glede, live coal, 1997.
gobet, fragment, 696.
godhede, godhead, divinity, 2381.
goldes, marigolds, 1929.
goliardeys, buffoon, 560.
good, property, 581, 611.
goon, gon, go, walk, go, 12, 771.
goost, gost, spirit, ghost, 205.
goot, goat, 688.
goune, gown, 93.

governaunce, management, 281; self-control, 4624; control, 4055.
grace, favor, 1245.
graunt, concession, 1306.
graunt-mercy, thanks, 4160.
grece, grease, 135.
gree, highest grade, victory, 2733.
grene, green color, 103, 150; green sprigs, 1512.
greve, grove, 1495; branches, 1507.
grisly, horrible, 1363.
grone, groan, 4076.
grope, test, 644.
grote, groat, 4148.
ground, texture, 453.
groyning, murmuring, 2460.
grucche, murmur, grumble, 3045.
gruf, flat on the face, 949.
grys, gray fur, 194.
gye, guide, 1950.

haberdasher, seller of hats, 361.
habergeoun, coat of mail, 76.
hadde, hade, had, 554.
hakke, hack, 2865.
halwes, saints, 14.
hamer, hammer, 2508.
han, have, 849.
hardily, certainly, 156.
hardy, bold, 405.
harlot, young person, fellow, rascal, 647.
harlotryes, ribald jests, 561.
harneised, equipped, 114.
harneys, harnays, armor, 1006; fittings, 2896.
harre, hinge, 550.
harrow, help, 4235.
harye, harie, drag, 2726.
hauberk, coat of mail, 2431.
haunt, practice, skill, 447.
heed, head, 198.
heelp, helped, 1651.
heep, crowd, host, 575.
heer, hair, 589.
heer, here, 1791.
heeth, heath, 6, 606.
hegge, hedge, 4408.
heigh, high, 316; great, 1798; **in heigh and lowe**, in all things, 817.
hele, health, 1271.
hele, heal, 2706.
hele, hide, conceal, 4245.
hem, them, 39.
hemself, themselves, 1254.
heng, hung, 160.
henne, hence, 2356.
hennes, hens, 4056.

nente, catch, seize, get, 299, 957.
heraud, herald, 2533.
herbergage, lodging, 4179.
herberwe, harbor, 403; inn, 765.
herde, herdsman, 603.
here, her, to her, 1421, 2057.
here-agayns, against this, 3039.
herkne, hearken, listen, 1526.
hert, hart, 1689.
herte, heart, 150.
herte-blood, heart's blood, 2006.
herte-spoon, breast-bone (?), 2606.
heste, command, 2532.
hete, promise, 2398.
hethen, heathen, 66.
hethenesse, heathen lands, 49.
heve, heave, 550.
hewe, complexion, hue, 394.
hewe, hew, cut, 1422.
hider, hither, 672.
hidous, hideous, 1978.
highte, be called, 1557; am called, 1558; was called, 616; were called, 2920.
highte, height; **on highte**, aloud, 1784.
hine, servant, hind, 603.
hipe, hip, 472.
hir, her, 119.
hir, their, 11; of them, 586.
ho, call for silence, 2533.
hold, possession, 4064.
holde, hold, 4625; **held**, esteemed, 1307.
hole, whole, 533.
holpen, helped, 18.
holt, grove, 6.
holwe, hollow, 289.
hond, hand, 399.
honest, creditable, 246.
honge, hang, 2410.
hool, whole, 3006.
hoom, home, 400.
hoppesteres, tossing, dancing, 2017.
hors, horse, 94; horses, 74.
hostiler, innkeeper, 241.
hote, hot, 394; hotly, 97.
hound, dog, 947.
houpe, whoop, 4590.
housbondrye, economy, 4018
humblesse, humility, 1781.
hunte, huntsman, 1678, 2628.
hurtle, hurl, 2616.
hust, hushed, 2981.
hy, high, 306.
hye, high, 271.
hye, hasten, hie, 2274.
hye, haste, 2979.

ilke, same, 175.

in, inne, inn, 2436, 4216.
inequal, hour inequal, hour of varying length, 2271.
infect, invalidated, 320.
infortune, misfortune, 2021.
inne, lodge, 2192.
inne, in, within, 1618.
inspire, quicken, breathe life into, 6.
ive, ivy; **erbe ive**, herb ivy (Ajuga Chamæpitys), 4156.
ivele, ill, 1127.

jalous, jealous, 1329.
jangle, chatter, prate, 4625.
janglere, jester, babbler, 560.
jape, trick, 705.
japs, befool, mock, 1729.
jeet, jet, 4051.
jet, fashion, mode, 682.
jolitee, sport, 1807; show, style, 680.
jolyf, jolif, joyful, 4264.
journee, day's march, 2738.
joynant, adjoining, 1060.
jugement, decision, 778.
juste, joust, tilt, 96, 2604.
justes, jousting-match, 2720.
juwise, sentence, 1739.

keep, care, heed, 398, 503.
kembd, combed, 2143.
kempe, shaggy, 2134.
kene, sharp, 104.
kepe, keep, 442; keep safe, 276; take care, 130; care, 2960.
keper, keeper, prior, 172.
kerver, carver, 1899.
kerving, carving, 1915.
kind, nature, 2451.
kinrede, kindred, 1286.
knarre, thick-set fellow, 549.
knarry, gnarled, 1977.
knave, boy, servant lad, 2728.
knobbe, knob, large pimple, 633.
knowe, know, 382; known, 1203.
kyn, cows, kine, 4021.

laas, las, cord, 392; snare, 1817.
lacerte, fleshy muscle, 2753.
laciuge, lacing, fastening, 2504.
lad, brought, 2620.
ladde, brought, 2275.
lafte, left, omitted, 492.
lak, lack, 4034.
lakked, lakkede, was lacking, 756, 2280.
land, lond, country, 194, 702.
langage, language, 211.
large, large, 472; **at thy large**, at large, 1283; **ben at hi**

large, to speak in general terms, 2288.
arge, freely, 734.
as, snare, 1951.
asse (and more), smaller and greater, 1756.
at, let, 188.
ate, lately, 77, 690.
atoun, latten, alloy of copper and zinc, 699.
aunde, glade, clearing, 1691.
aurer, laurel, 1027.
auriol, spurge laurel (Daphne laureola), 4153.
axatyf, laxative, 4133.
ayneres, straps, thongs (of armor), 2504.
azar, leper, 245.
echecraft, medical skill, 2745.
eed, caldron, boiler (for washing, etc.), 202.
eef, dear, pleasing, 1837; beloved, 4069.
emes, flames, 4120.
ene, lean, 287.
ene, lend, 611.
enger, longer, 330.
engthe, length, height, 83.
eoun, lion, 1598.
ere, learn, 4296.
erne, learn, 613.
ese, lose, 1215.
lesing, losing, 1707.
lesinge, lie, deceit, 1927.
lest, pleasure, joy, 132.
leste, (it) may please, 1848; (it) pleased, 750.
lete, let, leave, 1323.
lette, hinder, 889; refrain, 1317.
letuarie, electuary (syrup with other ingredients), 426.
leve, leave, 1614.
leve, believe, 3088.
levere, dearer, rather, more desirable, 293.
lewed, ignorant, lay (not of the clergy), 502, 574.
leye, lay, 841.
leyser, leisure, 1188.
licentiat, one licensed by the pope to hear confession and administer penance independently of the local ordinaries, 220.
liche-wake, watch over a corpse, 2958.
licour, moisture, 3.
lief, dear, lief. See **leef**.
liggen, lie, 2205.
ligne, line, lineage, 1551.
limes, limbs, 2135.
limitour, friar licensed to beg for alms within a certain district, 209.

linage, lineage, 1110.
lind, lime tree, 2922.
list, (it) pleases, 583; **liste**, (it) pleased, 102.
listes, lists, place enclosed for tournaments, 63, 1713.
litarge, litharge, white lead, 629.
litel, little, 87.
lith, limb, 4065.
lith, see **lyth**.
lives, living, 2395.
lode, load, 2918.
lodemenage, pilotage, 403.
lode-sterre, pole star, lode-star, 2059.
logge, lodge, resting-place, 4043.
logging, lodging, 4185.
loke, look, 1783.
loken, enlocked, 4065.
lokkes, locks (of hair), 81.
lond, see **land**.
longe, belong, 2791.
looth, distasteful, odious, 486, 1837.
lordinges, sirs, gentlemen, 761.
lore, teaching, 527.
los, loss, 2543.
losengeour, flatterer, 4516.
love-dayes, appointed days for settling disputes, 258.
lovyere, lover, 80.
luce, luce, pike, 350.
lust, pleasure, desire, 192, 1318
lustily, merrily, 1529.
lustinesse, pleasure, 1939.
lusty, joyful, 80.
lye, lie, contradiction, 3015.
lyf, life, 71.
lyk, like, 590.
lyth, lies, 1218.

maad, made, 394.
maister, master, 261.
maister-strete, main street 2902.
maistow, mayst thou, 1236.
maistrye, mastery; **maistry (for the)**, eminently, 165.
make, match, adversary, 2556
male, wallet, 694.
man, man, 167; one, 4513.
manace, threat, menace, 200
manasinge, threatening, 203
maner, sort of, kind of, 71.
mantelet, short mantle, 216
manye, mania, 1374.
many oon, many a one, 211
marchant, merchant, 270.
mary-bones, marrow bone 380.
mase, **maze**, perplexity, 428
mat, dejected, 955.

matere, matter, 727.
matrimoigne, matrimony, 3095.
maugre, in spite of, 1607.
maunciple, steward (who purchases the provisions), 544.
maydenhode, maidenhood, 2329.
mede, mead, meadow, 89.
mede, reward, meed, 770.
medlee, of a mixed color, 328.
men, one, some one, 149, 1524.
mencioun, mention, 893.
mene, mean, intend, 793.
mere, mare, 541.
mery, merry, 235.
meschaunce, misfortune, 2009.
meschief, misfortune, trouble, 493, 2551.
mester, occupation, 1340.
mesurable, moderate, 435.
mete, befitting, meet, 2291.
mete, meat, food, 136.
mete, meet, encounter, 1524.
mete, dream, 4445.
meth, mead (drink), 2279.
mewe, coop (for fowls), 349.
meynee, household, 1258; followers, 4584.
minister, officer, 4233.
minour, miner, 2465.
misboden, insulted, 909.
miscarie, come to harm, 513.
mishappe, (it) happens ill for, 1646.
mister, handicraft, 613; sort of, 1710.
mo, more, 576.
moche, muche, mochel, muchel, much, great; **moche and lite**, great and small, 494.
moder, mother, 4486.
moevere, mover, 2987.
mone, moon, 2077.
mone, moan, complaint, 1366.
mood, anger, 1760.
moot, mote, may, shall, must, should, ought to, 232, 742.
moralitee, moral (of a tale), 4630.
mordre, murder, 1256.
mormal, sore, gangrene, 386.
morne, morning, 358.
mortreux, thick, rich soups, 384.
morweninge, morning, 4492.
morwe-tide, morning hour, 4206.
mosel, muzzle, 2151.
mottelee, motley, 271.
mountaunce, amount, value, 1570.

muchel, mochel, much, great, 2352; greatly, 258. See **moche**.
murie, merry, 1386.

naciouns, people from different nations, 53.
nakers, kettle drums, 2511.
nam (ne am), am not, 1122.
namely, especially, 1268.
namo (na mo), no more, 101.
napoplexie, nor apoplexy, 4031.
narette (ne arette), impute not, 726.
narwe, narrow, 625.
nas (ne was), was not, 251.
nat, not, 74; **nat but**, only, 2722.
nath (ne hath), has not, 923.
nathelees, nevertheless, 35.
nayl, nail, 2007; claw, 2141.
ne, not, 70; nor, 179.
nede, needful, 304.
nedely, necessarily, 4435.
nedes, necessarily, 1290.
nedes-cost, of necessity, 1477.
nedeth, it needs, 462.
neer, near, 1439.
neer, nearer, 968.
neet, neat, cattle, 597.
nekke, neck, 238.
ner, nearer, 1850.
nercotikes, narcotics, 1472.
nere (ne were), were not, 875
newe, recently, 4239.
nexte, nearest, 1413.
nice, scrupulous, 398; foolish 4505.
nightertale, night-time, 97.
nis (ne is), is not, 901.
nolde (ne wolde), would not 1024.
nones, nonce; **for the nones** for the nonce, for the occasion, 379.
nonne, nun, 118.
noot (ne wot), know not 284.
norice, nurse, 4305.
norissing, nutriment, 437.
nose-thirles, nostrils, 557.
notabilitee, noteworthy fact 4399.
not-heed, crop-head, 109.
nothing, in no respect, 2505.
nought, not, 107.
nouthe, now, at present, 462
ny, close, 588; nearly, 73
wel ny, almost, 1330.

o, one, 304, 738.
obeisaunce, obedience, 2974
observaunce, respect, 1045.

of, by, 963; from, 420; in respect to, 69.
of, off, 2676.
offended, injured, 909; stricken, 2394.
offensioun, offence, stroke, 2416.
offertorie, sung while the offerings were collected, 710.
office, secular employment, 292.
offring, gift of alms at the altar, 450.
ofte, many; **ofte sithes**, oftentimes, 485; **ofte time**, often, 52.
on live, alive, 3039.
ones, once, 765.
ook, oak, 1702.
o, oon, one; **oon and oon**, one by one, 679; **many oon**, many a one, 317; **after oon**, equally good, 341; like, 1012.
ooth, oath, 120.
opie, opium, 1472.
oratorie, chapel for private devotions, 1905.
ordinaunce, arrangement, 2567.
orgon, organs (as the organ was once called from Latin *organa*), 4041.
orient, east, 1494.
orisoun, prayer, 2372.
orlogge, clock, 4044.
ought, aught, at all, 3045.
oughte, ought, 660.
ounces, small portions, strands, 677.
out, abroad, 45.
out-hees, hue and cry, 2012.
outher, either, 1485.
outrely, utterly, 4419.
out-rîdere, out-rider (to inspect granges, etc.), 166.
over, beyond, 2998.
over, upper, 133; **overeste**, uppermost, 290.
overal, everywhere, 216.
overthwart, crosswise, 1991.
owher, anywhere, 653.
oynement, ointment, 631.
oynons, onions, 634.

paas, pas, pace; foot-pace, 825; paces, yards, 1890.
pace, pass, go, 1602; go on, 36; surpass, 574.
paleys, palace, 2199.
palfrey, horse, 207.
pan, brain pan, skull, 1165.
paraments, rich apparel, 2501.
par amour, with real human love, 1155.

paramours, with devotion, 2112.
pardee, a common oath, 563.
pardoner, seller of indulgences (by which penance was remitted), 543.
parfit, perfect, 72.
parishens, parishioners, 482.
parlement, decree, 1306.
parte, part, party, side, 2582, 3006.
partrich, partridge, 349.
party, partly, 1053.
partye, portion, 3008; partisan, 2657.
parvys, church porch, 310.
pas, foot pace, walk, 825; paces, 1890.
passant, surpassing, 2107.
passe, surpass, 448, 2885.
patente, letter patent, 315.
payen, pagan, 2370.
pecok-arwes, arrows with peacocks' feathers, 104.
pees, peace, 532.
peire, see **peyre**.
pekke, peck, pick, 4157.
penaunce, penance, 223; suffering, 1315.
penoun, pennant, 978.
perce, pierce, 2.
perrye, jewellery, 2936.
pers, stuff of a sky-blue color, 439.
persone, persoun, person, 521; parson, 478.
perturben, disturb, 906.
peyne, torture, 1133.
peyne (one's self), take pains, 139, 4495.
peynte, paint, 1934.
peyre, pair, pair of, 2121; set, 159.
pighte, pitched, 2689.
pikepurs, pick-purse, 1998.
piled, deprived of hair, thin, 627.
piler, pillar, 1993.
pilours, robbers, pillagers, 1007.
pilwe-beer, pillow-case, 694.
pinche at, find fault with, 326.
pinched, pleated, 151.
pine, suffering, 1324; torture, 1746, 4249.
pipen, pipe, whistle, 1838.
pitaunce, gift of food, "good dinner," 224.
pitous, compassionate, 143; sorrowful, 955.
plat, flat, plain, 1845.
plates, iron plates (for armor), 2121.
plentevous, plentiful, 344.

plesaunce, pleasure, 2409.
plesen, please, 610.
pley, play, sport, 1125.
pleye, play, jest, amuse one's self, 772.
pleyinge, amusement, 1061.
pleyn, plain, 1091; open, 988.
pleyn, fully, 327.
pleyne, complain, 1251.
pollax, pole-axe, 2544.
pomel, round part, top, 2689.
pomely, dappled, 616.
poraille, poor people, 247.
port, behavior, 69.
portreiture, drawing, 1915.
portreyinge, picture, 1938.
pose, suppose, assume (for argument's sake), 1162.
post, support, 800.
poudre-marchant, kind of spice, 381.
pouped, puffed, 4589.
poure, pore, look, closely, 185.
povre, poor, 225.
poynaunt, pungent, 352.
poynt, aim and end, 1501; case, condition, 200.
practisour, practitioner, 422.
press, curl papers, 81; mould, 263.
prest, preest, priest, 164.
preve, proof, 4173.
preved, proved, 3001.
preye, beseech, 1483.
preyere, prayer, 231.
pricasour, hard rider, 189.
prike, spur, 2508; incite, 1043.
prikke, stab, 2606.
prime, first fourth of the time from sunrise to sunset, 2189; nine in the morning, 4387.
prively, secretly, 652.
privetee, private affairs, 1411.
profre, proffer, 1415.
propre, own, 581.
prow, advantage, profit, 4140.
prys, price, 815; renown, 67; praise, 2241.
pulle, pluck, 177, 652.
pultrye, poultry, 598.
purchas, perquisites, private gain, 256.
purchasing, conveyancing, 320.
purchasour, conveyancer, 318.
pure, very, 1279.
purfiled, bordered, 193.
purtreye, draw, 96.
purtreyour, draughtsman, 1899.
purveyaunce, providence, 1252.

qualm, disease, 2014.
quelle, kill, 4580.
queynt, quenched, 2321.
queynt, strange, quaint, 1531.
queynte, went out, 2334.
quike, alive, 1015.
quiked, became alive, 2335.
quite, repay, 770; ransom, 1032.
quitly, wholly, 1792.
quod, quoth, said, 1234.
quook, trembled, 1576.

rad; **hadde rad**, had read, 4311; **were rad**, were read, 2595.
rage, fierce blast, 1985.
rage, romp, act wantonly, 257.
ransake, ransack, 1005.
rasour, razor, 2417.
raughte, reached, 136.
raunsoun, ransom, 1024.
rebel, rebellious, 833.
recche, care, heed, 1398.
rechelees, **recchelees**, careless, heedless, 179, 4297.
reconforte, comfort again, 2852.
recorde, bear in mind, 1745; remind, 829.
rede, read, 709; counsel, 3068.
redily, quickly, promptly, 2276.
redy, ready, 21.
reed, counsel, advice, 1216; counsel, adviser, 665.
reed, red, 153.
registre, record, narrative, 2812.
regne, kingdom, realm, rule, 866, 1624.
rekene, reckon, 401.
rekening, reckoning, 600.
reme, realm, 4326.
remenant, remainder, 888.
renges, ranks, 2594.
renne, run, 2868.
renning, running, 551.
rente, rent (received), 1443; rent (given for exclusive right to beg), 256.
repentaunce, penitence, 1776.
replecioun, repletion, 4113.
replicacioun, reply, 1846.
reportour, reporter, 814.
rescous, rescue, 2643.
rese, to shake, 1986.
resoun, reason, right, 37, 274.
resoune, resound, 1278.
respyt, delay, 948.
rethor, orator, 4397.
reule, rule, 173.
reuled, ruled, 816.
reve, steward, bailiff, agent, 542.

revel, revelry, 2717.
revers, reverse, contrary, 4167.
rewe, have pity, 2382; make sorry, 4287.
rewe, row, line, 2866.
rewful, sorrowful, 2886.
reysed, gone on a military expedition, 54.
richesse, riches, wealth, 1255.
right, direct, 2739.
right, just, decidedly, very, 257, 757.
rightes, at alle rightes, in all respects, 1852.
rise, rise, 33.
rit, rides, 974.
rite, rite, 2284.
rome, roam, wander, 1099.
ronne, ran, 4578.
rood, rode, 169.
roos, rose, 823.
roost, roast meat, 206.
roste, roast, 383.
rote, fiddle with three strings (?), 236.
roughte, recked, cared, 4530.
rouketh, cowers, crouches, 1308.
rouncy, dray horse, farm horse, 390.
roundel, roundel, roundelay, 1529.
route, company, troop, rout, 889.
routhe, ruth, pity, 914.
rudeliche, rudely, 734.
ruggy, rough, 2883.
rumbel, rumbling noise, 1979.

sad, serious, 2985.
sadly, firmly, 2602.
salue, salute, 1492.
sangwyn, sangwin, stuff of a blood-red color, 439; sanguine (of temperament), 333; very ruddy, 2168.
sarge, serge, 2568.
saufly, safely, 4398.
saugh, saw, 764.
sautrye, psaltery (musical instrument), 296.
save, sage, 2713.
savinge, except, 2838.
sawcefleem, pimpled, 625.
sawe, saw, did see, should see, 144.
sawe, saying, saw, 1163; saving, talk, 1526.
say, saw, did see, 4304.
scalled, scurfy, 627.
scapen, escape, 1107.
scarlet, scarlet stuff, 456.
scarsly, economically, 583.
scathe, a pity, 446.

science, knowledge (of law), 316.
sclendre, slender, scanty, 4023.
scole, school, 125.
scoler, scholar, 260.
scoleye, attend school, study, 302.
scriptures, writings, treatises, 2044.
seche, seek, 784.
secree, secret, trusty, 4105.
see, sea, 59.
seen, see, 914.
seet, sat, 2075.
sege, siege, 56.
seigh, saw, 193.
seistow, sayest thou, 1125.
seke, seek, 17.
seke, sick, 18, 245.
selde, seldom, 1539.
selle, sell, barter, 278.
selve, self-same, 2584.
sely, poor, 4565.
seme, seem, 39.
semely, seemly, 751; becomingly, 123.
semicope, half-cope, short cope, 262.
sendal, thin silk, 440.
sene, visible, manifest, 134, 924.
sentence, significance, 306; meaning, 4355; subject, 4404.
sergeant of the lawe, sergeant-at-law, 309.
serie, series of reflections, 3067.
servage, servitude, 1946.
servant, lover, 1814, 2787.
servisable, willing to be of service, 99.
sesoun, season, 19.
seten, hath seten, has sat, 1452.
setes, seats, 2580.
sethe, seethe, boil, 383.
sette, set; **sette to hire**, sold or leased, 507.
seuretee, surety, 1604.
sewe, follow, 4527.
seye, seyn, say, 738.
seyen, saw, 4568.
seyl, sail, 696.
seynd, singed, fried, 4035.
seynte, holy, 1721; saint, 120.
shadwed, shaded, 607.
shake, shaken, 406.
shal, shall, must, am to, 187, 853.
shamfast, modest, 2055.
shap, shape, 1889.
shape, intend, 772; prepare, 809; ordain, 1108.
shaply, fit, 372.
shave, shaven, 588.

sheef, sheaf, 104.
sheld, sheeld, shield, 2122; name of a coin, 278.
shende, harm, injure, 2754, 4031.
shene, bright, 115.
shent, shente, see **shende**.
shepne, stable, shed, 2000.
shere, pair of shears, 2417.
sherte, shirt, 1566.
shet, shut, closed, 2597.
shine, shin, 386.
shipman, sailor, skipper, 388.
shirreve, sheriff, 359.
shiten, defiled, dirty, 504.
sho, shoe, 253.
shode, temple (of the head), 2007.
shoon, shone, 198.
shorte, shorten, 791.
shortly, briefly, to be brief, 30.
short-sholdred (?), 549.
shot, missile, arrow, 2544.
shoures, showers, 1.
shrewe, beshrew, curse, 4616.
shrighte, shrieked, 2817.
shriked, shrieked, 4590.
shul, shall, 1747.
shuldres, shoulders, 678.
shullen, shall, 3014.
sighte, foresight, providence, 1672.
sik, syk, sick, 1600.
sike, sigh, 2985.
siker, sure, 3049.
sikerly, surely, 137.
sikes, sighs, 1920.
siknes, siknesse, sickness 493, 1256.
sin, since, 601.
singe, sing, 236.
sit, sits, 1599.
sithen, since, 2102.
sithes, times, 485.
sitte, sit, 94.
slake, slow, 2901.
slaughtre, murder, 2031.
slee, slay, 661.
sleep, slept, 1474.
sleighte, cunning, 604; dexterity, 1948.
slepe, sleep, 10.
sleepy, sleep-bestowing, 1387.
slider, slippery, 1264.
slily, cautiously, 1444.
slogardye, sluggishness, 1042.
slough, slew, 980.
smerte, smartly, sharply, 149.
smerte, (it) pains, hurts, 230.
smiler, smiler, flatterer, 1999.
smite, strike, 1220.
smokinge, full of smoke, of incense, 2281.
smoot, smote, 149.

snewed, snowed, 345.
snibben, reprove, 523.
socour, succor, help, 918.
sodeynliche, suddenly, 1575.
sodeynly, suddenly, 1118.
softe, softly, 2781.
solas, amusement, entertainment, 798.
solempne, imposing, impressive, 209; important, 364.
solempnely, pompously, 274.
solempnitee, pomp, 870.
som, some; **som . . . som**, one . . . another, 1255–1257; **somme . . . somme**, some . . . others, 2516.
somdel, somewhat, 174.
somer, summer, 394.
somnour, summoner (of delinquents before the ecclesiastical courts), 543.
somtime, at some time, 65.
sondry, various, 14.
sone, soon, 1022.
song, **songe**, **songen**, sang, 1055.
sonne, sun, 7; **of the sun**, 1051.
soor, sore, pain, 1454.
soor, wounded, grieved, 2695.
sooth, truth, 284.
soothly, truly, 117.
sop, bread or cake in some liquid, 334.
soper, supper, 348.
sore, sorrow, pang, 2849.
sore, sorely, 148.
sort, destiny, 844.
sorwe, sorrow, 951.
sory, mournful, 2004.
sote, sweet, 1.
sothe, truth, 845.
sotil, fine, 2030; skilful, 2045.
soule, soul, 510.
soun, sound, 674.
soune, **sowne**, sound, 565; proclaim, 275.
souple, pliant, 203.
sovereyn, supreme, 67.
sovereynly, chiefly, 4552.
sowed, sewn, 685.
space, space of time, 87; room enough, 35; course, 176.
spak, spoke, 124.
sparre, wooden beam, 990.
sparth, battle-axe, 2520.
sparwe, sparrow, 626.
speces, species, 3013.
special, special; **in special**, especially, 444.
specially, in particular, 15.
spede, speed, prosper, 769; hasten, 1217.
speke, speak, 142.

spere, spear, 114.
spiced, foolishly scrupulous, 526.
spicerye, spices and gums, 2935.
spore, spur, 2603.
sprad, spread, 2903.
spronge, spread abroad, 1437.
squyer, squire, 79.
stablissed, established, 2995.
stape, advanced, 4011.
starf, died, 933.
startlinge, in constant motion, 1502.
stat, state, condition, 572.
statue, statue, picture, 975.
stede, place; **in stede of**, 231.
stede, steed, 2157.
stele, steal, 562.
stemed, shone, glowed, 202.
stente, leave off, 903; stop, 2442.
stepe, bright, 201.
sterre, star, 268.
stert, start; **at a stert**, in a moment (with one bound), 1705.
sterte, start, leap, 952.
sterve, die, 1249.
stevene, voice, 2562; time, 1524.
stewe, fish-pond, 350.
stikkes, palings, 4038.
stille, quietly, 1003.
stinte, leave off, 1334; cease, 2421.
stith, anvil, 2026.
stiwardes, stewards, 579.
stok, stock, race, 1551; **stokkes**, stumps, 2934.
stoke, stab, 2546.
stomblem, stumble, 2613.
stonde, stand, 745.
stongen, stung, 1079.
stoor, stock (of a farm), 598; **telle no store of**, "take no stock in," 4344.
storie, legend of a saint (or the like), 709.
stot, undersized horse, cob, 615.
stounde, hour, any time, 1212.
stout, strong, 545; brave, 2154.
straughte, extended, 2916.
straunge, strange, foreign, 13.
strecche, stretch, 4498.
stree, straw, 2918.
streem, stream, 464; current, 402; beams, rays, 1495.
streight, straight, 1690; straightway, 671.
streit, narrow, 1984; scanty, 4179; strict, 174; drawn (of a sword), 4547.

strepe, strip, 1006.
streyne, constrain, 4434.
strike, hank, 676.
strive, strive, struggle, 1177.
strond, strand, 13.
stroof, strove, vied, 1038.
strook, stroke, 1701.
stryf, quarrel, strife, 1187.
stubbes, stubs, stumps, 1978.
subtil, fine-wrought, 1054.
subtilly, craftily, 610.
suffisaunce, sufficiency, 490; contentment, 4029.
suffisaunt, sufficient, 1631.
surcote, surcoat, overcoat, 617.
sustene, sustain, 1993.
suster, sister, 871.
sustren, sisters, 1019.
suyte, suit, array, 2873.
swelte, grew faint, 1356.
swerd, sword, 112.
swere, swear, 454.
swete, sweet, 5.
swevene, dream, 4086.
swevenis, dreams, 4111.
swich, such, 3.
swink, labor, toil, 188.
swinke, work, toil, 186.
swinkere, laborer, toiler, 531.
swough, whistling (of the wind), 1979.
swowne, swoon, 913.
tabard, loose outer garment somewhat like a blouse 541.
taffata, taffeta, 440.
taille, tally; **by taille**, on account, 570.
tak, take (thou), 1084.
take, taken, 3007.
takel, set of arrows, archers' gear, 106.
tale, tale, 831; **telle litel tale of**, to give little heed to, 4308.
talen, tell tales, 772.
tapicer, upholsterer, 362.
tappestere, hostess, barmaid, 241.
targe, target, shield, 471.
tarien, delay, waste, 2820.
tartre, tartar, 630.
tas, heap, 1005.
teche, teach, 308; direct, 4139.
teching, teaching, 518.
telle, tell, 38; count, 4308, 4344.
temple, inn of court (abode of lawyers), 567.
tene, vexation, 3106.
terciane, tertian (fever), 4149.
tere, tear, 1280.
terme, allotted period, 1029; exact words, 323; periods, 3028.

testeres, headpieces, 2499.
text, quotation from any authority, 177.
than, thanne, then, 12.
thank, expression of thanks, 612; **can thank**, owes thanks, 1808; **his thankes**, of his free will, 1626, for his part, 2107; **hir thankes**, for their part, 2114.
that, that which, what, 1425.
thee, thrive, prosper, 4622.
ther, there, 43; where, 547; **ther as**, where, 172.
therto, besides, moreover, 48, 153.
therwithal, with it, 566; thereupon, 1078.
thider, thither, 1263.
thiderward, thither, 2530.
thikke, thick-set, 549.
thikke-herd, thick-haired, 2518.
thilke, that same, that, 182, 1193.
thing, thing or things, brief, writ, deed, etc., 325; **thinges**, holy rites, 2293; business matters, 4279.
thinketh, it seems, 37.
thirle, pierce, 2710.
thise, these, 701.
tho, those, 498.
tho, then, 993.
thoughte (he), he thought, 984.
thoughte (us), it seemed to us, 785.
thral, enthralled, 1552.
threed, thread, 2030.
threshe, thrash, 536.
threste, thrust, 2612.
thridde, third, 1463.
thriftily, carefully, 105.
throte, throat, 2013.
thryes, thrice, 63.
thurgh, through, 920.
thurghfare, thoroughfare, 2847.
thurgh-girt, pierced through, 1010.
thyselven, thyself, 1174.
tide, time; **tides**, tides, 401.
tigre, tiger, 2626.
tiraunt, tyrant, 961.
til, to, 180.
til, till, until, 1760.
tipet, tippet, cape, 233.
tiptoon, tiptoes, 4497.
to, too, toe, 2726; **toon**, toes, 4052; **toos**, toes, 4370.
tobreste, break in pieces, 2611.
tobrosten, broken in pieces, 2691.

togidre, together, 824.
tohewen, hew in twain, 2609.
tollen, take toll (as a miller pays himself with meal), 562.
tonge, tongue, 265.
tonne-greet, great as a tun, 1994.
tool, weapon, 4106.
top, top of the head, 590.
toshrede, cut into shreds, 2609.
toun, town, 217.
tour, tower, 1030.
touret, toret, turret, 1909; on the collar of a dog, a projection that revolves and is pierced for a ring, swivel-ring, 2152.
traitour, traitor, 1130.
trapped, furnished with trappings, 2890.
trappures, trappings (for horses), 2499.
traunce, trance, 1572.
trays, traces (of harness), 2139.
trecherye, treachery, 4520.
trede, tread, 3022.
tresoun, treason, 2001.
tretee, treaty, 1288.
tretis, well-proportioned, 152.
trewe, true, 531.
trewely, truly, 481.
trompe, trumpet, 674; **trumpeter**, 2671.
tronchoun, shaft of a spear, 2615.
trone, throne, 2529.
trouthe, truth, 46; promise, 1610.
trowe, believe, 155.
trussed, packed, 681.
tukked, tucked, 621.
turne, turn, 1488.
turneyinge, tournament, 2557.
tweye, two, 704.
tweyne, twain, 1134.
twines, of twine, 2030.

uncouth, strange, rare, 2497.
undergrowe, of short stature, 156.
undern, latter part of the forenoon, more precisely about eleven, 4412.
undernethe, beneath, 2077.
undertake, affirm, 288; conduct affairs, 405.
unknowe, unknown, 126.
unkonning, inexperienced, 2393.
unset, unappointed, 1524.
unwist, unknown, 2977.
unyolden, without having yielded, 2642.

up, on, 1707.
uphaf, uplifted, 2428.
upright, face upward, 2008.
upriste, uprising, 1051.
up-so-doun, upside down, 1377.
upyaf, gave up, 2427.
up-yolden, yielded up, 3052.
us, us, 748 ; for us, 747.
usage, experience, 2448.

vanishinge, vanishing, disappearance, 2360.
vasselage, good service, prowess, 3054.
vavasour, sub-vassal (inferior to baron), 360.
venerye, hunting, 166.
venim, venom, poison, 2751.
ventusinge, cupping (surgical operation), 2747.
verdit, verdict, 787.
vernicle, vernicle, 685.
verraily, truly, 338.
verray, true, very, 72.
vers, verses, 4503.
vertu, virtue, 307 ; power, 4, 2249.
vertuous, able to raise money, 251.
vese, veze, gust (of wind), 1985.
vestiments, garments, 2948.
veyl, vail, 695.
veyn, vain, false, 1094.
veyne-blood, blood-letting, 2747.
viage, voyage, journey, 77, 723.
vigilyes, festival eves, 377.
vileinye, unseemly language or conduct or thought, any sign of low breeding or vile nature, disgrace, 2729.
visite, visit, 493.
vitaille, victuals, provisions, 248.
vouche sauf, agree, consent 807, 812.
voyden, to get rid of, 2751.
voys, voice, 688.

waille, wail, 931.
wake-pleyes, funeral games, 2960.
wal, wall, 1909.
walet, wallet, 686.
walke, walk, 2309.
wan, won, 442.
wanhope, despair, 1249.
wanie, wane, 2078.
wantoun, free, unconstrained, 208.
wantounesse, gayety, 264.
war, wary, 309 ; aware, 157.

war him, let him beware, 662.
waste, ruined, 1331.
wastel breed, choice bread, 147.
waterlees, out of the water, 180.
wawe, wave, 1958.
wayke, weak, 887.
wayle, wail, 1221.
waymentinge, lamentation, 995.
wayte, watch, 571; **wayte after**, look for, expect, 525; seek occasion, 1222.
webbe, weaver, 362.
wed. security; **to wedde**, in pledge, 1218.
wedde, wed, 868.
wede, clothing, 1006.
weel, well, 2123.
wel, well, 384; fully, 24.
wele, well, 2231.
wele, happiness, 895.
welle, source, spring, 3037.
wende, **weende**, fancied, 1269.
wende, go, 16; pass away, 3025; **he wente him**, he went, 2270.
wene, ween, think, fancy, 1804.
wepe, weep, 144.
wepne, weapon, 1591.
were, wear, 75.
were, defend, 2550.
werk, work, 479.
werke, work, 779.
werre, war, 47.
werreye, make war, 1484; make war against, 1544.
werte, wart, 555.
wesh, washed, 2283.
wete, wet, 1280.
wex, wax, 675.
wexe, grow, become, 3024.
wey, **weye**, way, 791.
weye, weigh, 1781.
weylaway, alas, 938.
weyle, see **wayle**.
whan, **whanne**, when, 18.
what, why, 184.
whelkes, pimples, blotches, 632.
whelp, cub, 2627; **whelpe**, puppy, 257.
wher, where, 897; **wherever**, 2252.
wher, whether, 2397.
whether, which (of two), 1856.
which, which, 161; who, 1412; whom, 568; what kind of (men), 40; **which a**, what a, 2675; **which that**, who, 986.
whilom, once, formerly, 795.

whippeltre, cornel tree, 2923.
whyl, while, 35.
whyt, white, 238.
widwe, widow, 253.
wight, person, living being, 71, 280.
wighte, weight, 2145.
wike, week, 1530.
wikke, wicked, evil, 1087.
wilfully, voluntarily, 4557, 4622.
wille, pleasure, desire, 1317.
wilne, desire, 2114.
wilow, willow tree, 2922.
wiltow, wilt thou, 1156.
wimpel, wimple, 151.
wirche, work, 2759.
wise, way, manner, 1740.
wisly, surely, truly, 1863.
wiste, knew, 224.
wit, judgment, understanding, 279.
wite, know, 1260.
with, by, 2018, 2724.
withholde, kept in retirement, 511.
withouten, **withoute**, without, 538; besides, 461.
withseyn, **withseye**, gainsay, 805; deny, 1140.
witing, knowledge, 1611.
wive, **wives**, see **wyf**.
wlatsom, hateful, 4243.
wo, lamentation, 900; **wo was his cook**, woe to his cook, 351.
wode, wood, 2297.
wodebinde, woodbine, 1508.
wofuller, sadder, 1340.
wol, **wolt**, **woltow**, **woln**, **wold**, **wolde**, **wolden**, will, wilt, wilt thou, would, etc., 42, 144, 1544.
wommanhede, womanly feeling, 1748.
wonder, wonderful, 2073; wondrously, 1654.
wonderly, wondrously, 84.
wone, habit, wont, 335.
wone, dwell, 388, 2927.
woning, dwelling, house, 606.
wonne, conquered, 51.
wood, mad, 582.
woodly, madly, 1301.
woodnesse, madness, 2011.
wook, awoke, 1393.
woot, know, 389; **wost**, knowest, 1174; **wostow** knowest thou, 1163.
worship, honor, 1912.
worshipe, reverence, 2251.
worshipful, honorable, 1435.
wortes, herbs, 4411.
worthinesse, bravery, 50.

worthy, distinguished, **47**; wealthy, respectable, 217.
wostow, knowest thou, 2504.
wrastle, wrestle, 2961.
wrecche, wretched, 1106; sorrowful creature, **931**.
wreke, wreak, avenge, 961.
wrethe, wreath, crown, 2145.
wrighte, workman, 614.
writ, writes, 4313.
wrooth, wroth, angry, 451.
wroughte, wrought, 497.
wyd, wide, 491.
wyf, wife, 445; **to wive**, to wife, 1860; **wives**, women, wives, 234.
wyn, wine, 334.
wys, **wis**, surely, 2786.
wys, wise, 68; **make it wys**, be too particular about it, 785.

yaf, gave, 1441; cared, 177.
ybeen, been, 4487.
ybete, beaten, 979.
ybore, **yborn**, carried, borne, 378, 2694.
yborn, born, 1019.
ybounden, bound, 1149.
ybrent, burnt, 946.
ybrought, brought, 1111.
yclenched, clenched, riveted, 1991.
ycleped, **yclept**, called, **410**, 376.
yclothed, clothed, clad, 1048.
ycome, come, 77.
ycorve, cut, 2013.
ydo, done, 2534.
ydon, done, 2676.
ydoon, done, 4610.
ydrawe, drawn, 396.
ydriven, driven, 2007.
ydropped, bedropped, 2884.
ye, ye, you, 769.
ye, eye, 10.
yeddinges, songs, 237.
yeer, year, 347.
yeldehalle, guild hall, 370.
yelding, produce, 596.
yelleden, yelled, 4579.
yelpe, boast, 2238.
yelwe, yellow, 1929.
yeman, yeoman, 101.
yemanly, like a yeoman, 106.
yerd, yard, garden, 4037.
yerde, rod, wand, 1387; switch, 149; yard (length), 1050.
yet, moreover, 612; as yet, 291; **yet now**, just now, 1156.
yeve, give, 232.
yfalle, fallen, 25.
yfetered, fettered, 1229.

yfounde, found, 1211.
ygo, gone, 286.
ygrounde, ground, whetted, 2549.
yholde, held, regarded, 2374; held, celebrated, 2958.
yhurt, hurt, 2709.
yif, give (thou), 2260.
yiftes, gifts, 2198.
yive, give, 225.
yiven, given, 915.
yknowe, known, 423.
ylad, drawn, 530.
ylaft, left, 2746.
yliche, alike, 2526.
ylogged, lodged, 4181.
ylyk, like, 592; alike, 2734; **ylyke**, like, 1539.
ymaked, made, 2065.
ymet, met, 2624.
ymeynd, mixed, mingled, 2170.
ynough, enough, 373.
yolle, shout, 2672.
yond, yonder, 1099.
yong, young, 79.
yore agoon, for a long time, 1813.
youling, loud lamentation, 1278.
yow, you, 34.
ypayed, paid, 1802.
ypreved, proved, 485.
ypunished, punished, 657.
yraft, snatched away, 2015.
yronne, run, 8; clustered, 2165; **was yronnen in**, had rushed to, 2693.
yscalded, scalded, 2020.
ysene, visible, 592.
yserved, served, 963.
yset, appointed, 1635.
yseyled, sailed, 4289.
yshorn, shorn, 589.
yshrive, shriven, 226.
yslayn, slain, 2708.
yspreynd, sprinkled, 2169.
ystiked, stuck, 1565.
ystorve, dead, 2014.
ysworn, sworn, 1132.
ytaught, taught, 127.
yteyd, tied, 457.
ywedded, wedded, 3098.
ywimpled, provided with a wimple, 470.
ywis, certainly, truly, 4389.
ywrite, written, 4632.
ywrye, covered, 2904.

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